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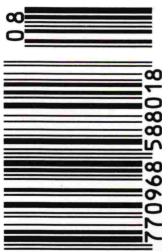
ANIME UK

MAGAZINE

8

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FORWARD TO THE STARS

TEKKAMAN BLADE

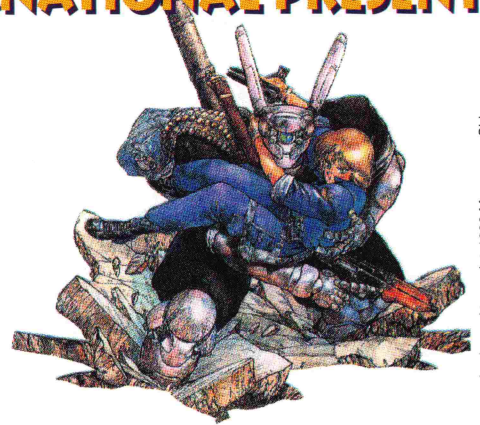
MANGA MANIA



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MANGA mania

GODZILLA The world's favourite multi-storey monster returns to terrorize modern-day Tokyo in an action-packed epic by **Kazuhisa Iwata!**

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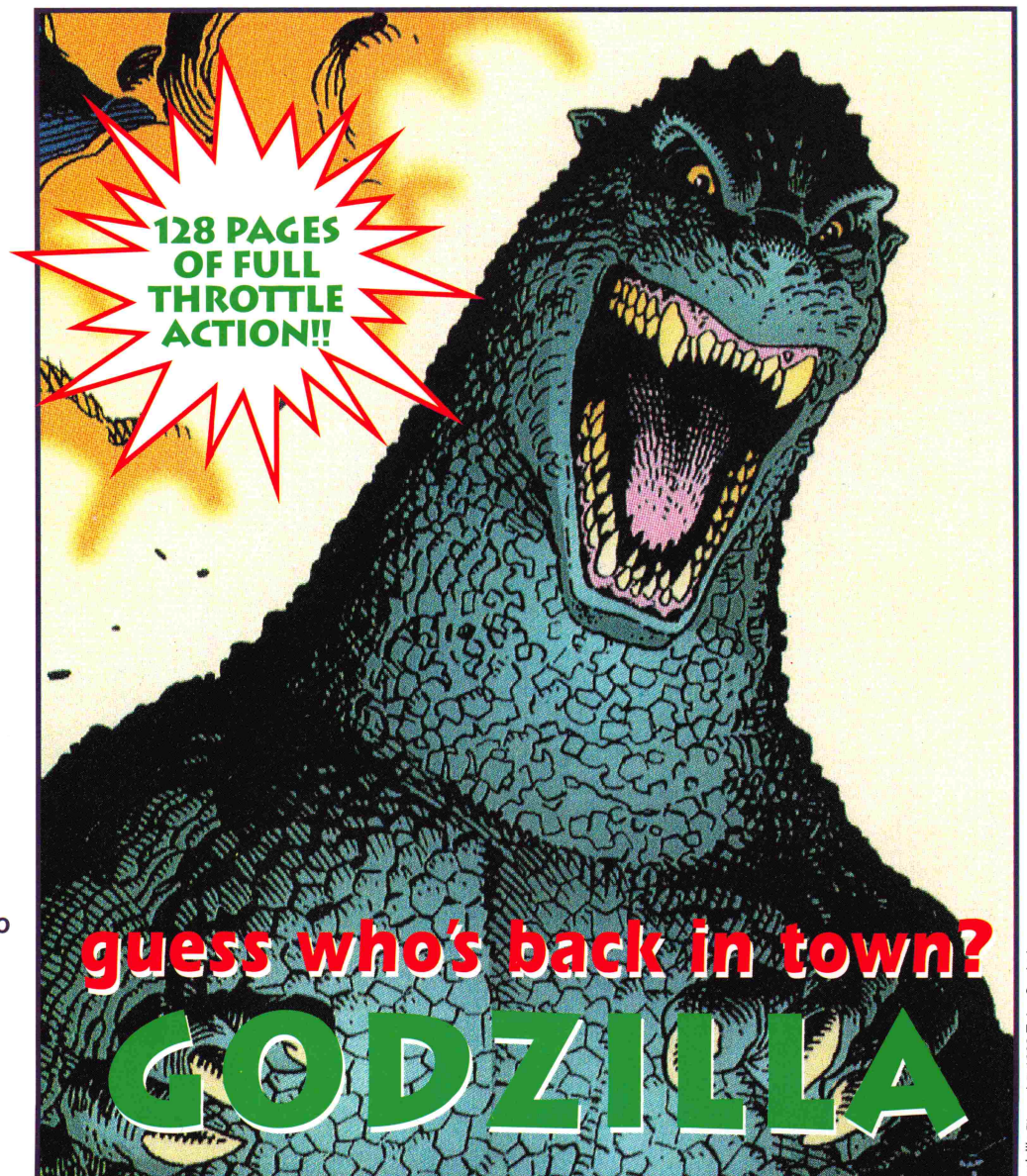
APPLESEED Hi-tech humour and non-stop mayhem by **Masamune Shirov** in the adventures of a girl and her cyborg, newly recruited into the police force of Olympus.

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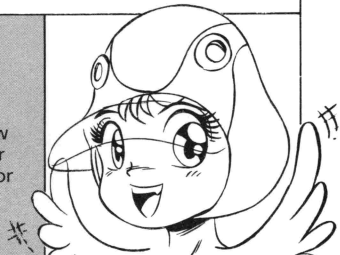
We would very much like to thank Bandai Visual Co. Ltd. and especially Ms. Hiroko Akatsu for their help, assistance and kind permission in letting us reproduce the Dirty Pair: Project Eden centrespread in this issue.

VOL 2 • NO 3

EDITOR

Helen McCarthy

is trying to squeeze into last year's bikini and wondering how Super Deformed became Super Expanded. (This is retribution for chocoholism.)



ART and DESIGN

Wil Overton

is wondering how he'll live down his wholly undeserved reputation for crossdressing as a pinkhaired magical princess with the beachbronzed hunks of California.



STAFF ARTIST

Steve Kyte

is looking for a suitably cool hairstyle and practising a whole range of Japanese superlatives to describe the Guests of Honour's work in the art shows.



PUBLISHER

Peter Goll

is reading "How to Spot a Distributor Across a Crowded Room" and checking up on pound-to-dollar conversion rates - assuming anyone will still swap anything for British currency by the end of June...



KONNICHIWA!

By the time you read this, Steve and I will be packing for California and our guest appearance at **ANIME AMERICA**. Wil and Peter will join us the following weekend so that the whole AUK publication team can be guests at **ANIME EXPO**. I know this may seem a little unfair to them, but after all someone has to keep an eye on the typesetters and printers and ensure that work on issue 9 carries on while the editor's off doing all the vital interviews and covering news stories from the anime hotspots of California. Lynn can't do everything on her own, you know! (Besides, Wil and Peter lost the toss. Yes, it was my penny....)

We're very flattered that our American counterparts think so highly of our magazine, and want to build closer links between the British and American anime scenes. We hope you'll enjoy our coverage of both conventions later in the year. And there's just one other thing we want you to remember.

As you shiver under your umbrellas on a typical British summer's day, thinking of us sunning on the beach or strolling down treelined avenues beside a glorious blue ocean, breakfasting within earshot of Ken-ichi Sonoda or sharing a corner of the bar with Michitaka Kikuchi, bear this in mind - we're doing it all for YOU.

But somehow, I don't think you'll enjoy it quite as much as we will!

Yours animatedly

HELEN McCARTHY
Editor

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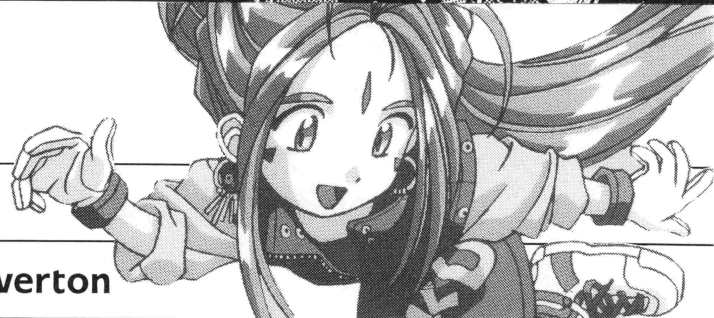
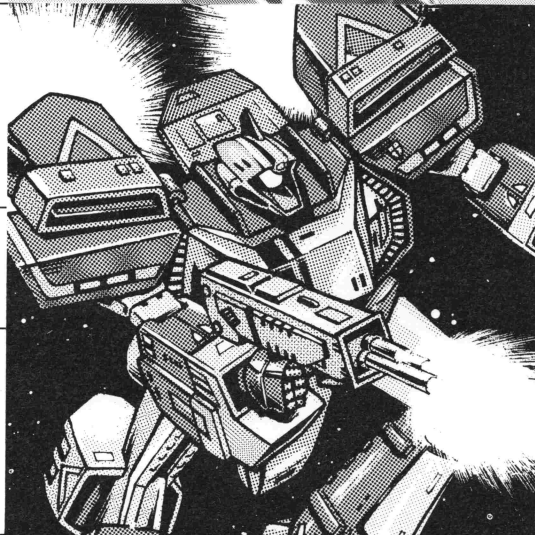
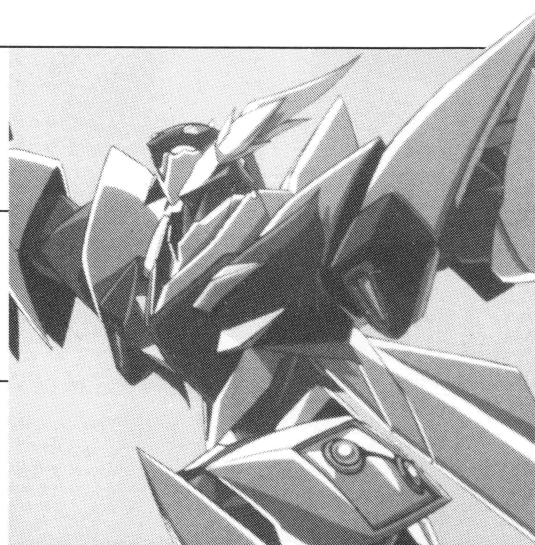
FANSCENE ROUNDUP EYECATCH

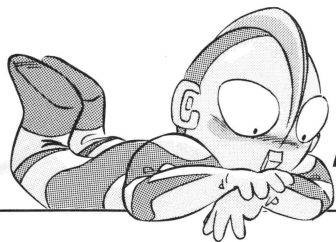
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NEWSLINE

MANGA VIDEO NEWS

A change of name for **ISLAND WORLD COMMUNICATIONS** to **MANGA ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED** reflects the company's commitment to the anime field. They have also supplied details of their planned video releases on the **MANGA VIDEO** and **ULTRA VIDEO** labels from now until September. **ULTRAMAN : ALIEN INVASION** came out on March 1st and **ULTRAMAN : BATTLE FOR EARTH** will follow on September 6th. **VAMPIRE HUNTER D** appeared on May 4th with **UROTSUKIDOJI 2** and **LENSMAN** to follow on June 7th. **RG VEDA** and **HEROIC LEGEND OF ARSLAN I** on July 5th. August 2nd sees the release of **CRYING FREEMAN I** and **DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS I**, and on September 6th you'll be able to buy my own personal favourite **MANGA VIDEO** release of the year - **YOJU TOSHI**, to be released as **MONSTER CITY**.

At **AD FILE 3** Laurence Guinness of Manga Entertainment announced that the company plans to release 60 films over the next 2 years, but agreed that this was only a tiny drop in the ocean compared to the amount of anime available in Japan.

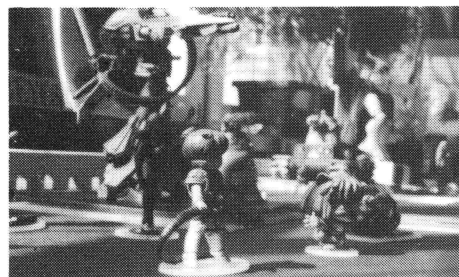
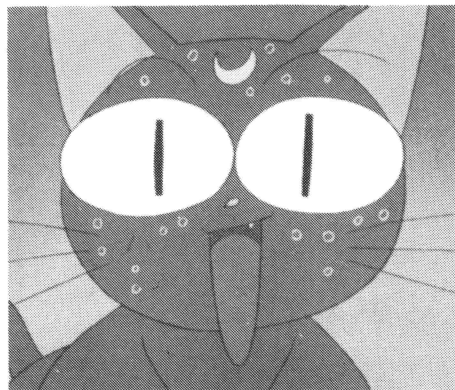
Titan Books have commissioned **ANIME UK MAGAZINE** editor **Helen McCarthy** to write their first book on anime. **ANIME - A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO JAPANESE ANIMATION**, ISBN 1 85286 492 3, will appear in the bookshops in September 1993. It will feature a brief history of anime, an extended glossary of anime terms, a look at a few major themes of the medium and lots of pictures, all packed into 64 pages for a retail price of £6.99. There will also be a chapter on where to find anime information and goods, and a detailed index to all productions mentioned, which should hopefully make the book a useful reference work for any new anime fan.. Helen recently visited the tv programme market MIP-TV in Cannes to make contact with some of the studios whose work is featured in the book.

AD FILE 3 - A BUMA OF A CON!

Far more people crammed into the Rutland Hotel, Sheffield, than the organisers expected for **AD FILE 3** - fire limits imposed their own constraints on the event and people hoping to get in on the door were turned away after attendee number 265 registered. People had travelled from as far afield as Scotland and Cornwall, but even the South of France was represented by fans who had travelled from 5 pm on Thursday 15th April to reach Sheffield by Friday evening. They all agreed it was worth the journey.

The con's four video rooms were not enough and were quickly expanded. The dealer's room was crammed all day on Saturday and fan shopping frenzy was much in evidence for the first two hours, with a resurgence around the now-traditional late arrival of the Japan Centre with their crates of **DRAGON BALL Z**, **TOTORO**, **SAILOR MOON** and other goodies. The art show was small but had some remarkable work, including Sarah Aplin's superb **TOTORO** model which later attracted keen bidding in the auction. **AUK** editor Helen McCarthy gave a talk on **WOMEN IN ANIME** and was joined by Steve Kyte and Jim Swallow for a lively panel on anime issues, including reader reactions to **ANIME UK MAGAZINE**

A shock result in the latest **ANIMAGE GRAND PRIX**, an annual vote to find readers' best anime of the year - for the first time, a new Miyazaki film *DIDN'T* win. In fact, the lyrical, lush and dazzling **PORCO ROSSO** (OK, I think it *OUGHT* to have won!) was beaten into third place. Winner? **BISHOJO SENSHI SAILOR MOON!**



(it was quite embarrassing - not one single brickbat!) and the sub-dub debate, which is frequently described as tired and old-hat but never fails to get people talking.

It was generally agreed that for **ANIME DAY 4** a bigger hotel would have to be found and the con committee plans to look for a site to accommodate more of Britain's growing army of anime fans. Also under discussion were ConTanimeted's plan to allow under-16s to attend, a move which is also being considered by the **ANIME DAY** team in response to the number of younger fans being attracted to anime by console games.

NEW RELEASES REVIEWED

VAMPIRE HUNTER D - Manga Video

This is often described as one of the classics of anime fandom, and contains one of the most popular chara designs by renowned artist Amano Yoshitaku in the elongated and heavily cloaked shape of the title character, D, one of those versions of the Man With No Name so popular in Japanese cinema. For "classic" read "older", and many fans drawn to anime by **AKIRA** will find **VAMPIRE HUNTER D's** earlier style of animation and characterisation a very different experience.



This typical vampire tale is about as close in style and content to **UROTSUKIDOJI : LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND** and other such gore'n'guts shockers as the old Hammer horror movies are to their modern counterparts; the general theme may be the same but SFX have advanced and public sensibilities coarsened, so that the earlier films now exude a slightly faded, old-world charm. Nevertheless, **VAMPIRE HUNTER D** should not be rejected out of hand by the cyberpunk fanciers purely on the grounds of style and design. There are some very good ideas in there - the rubber-limbed bouncy-clown ghoul and the snake sisters are interesting and the evil Count's daughter with her insistence on clinging to the status of "old nobility" in the face of the encroaching tide of common humanity is a sad figure. The film's main problem is its dubbing.

According to the cover of the timecode copy we reviewed, this is a Streamline dub, but since the end credits were all in Japanese I don't know which voice artists to blame for the pathetic cod-Hungarian accent which some characters occasionally attempted. Greco, the obnoxious unwanted suitor who pursues Doris devotedly, seems unable to decide whether he's all-American or Transylvanian, while heroine Doris and her little brother Dan, voiced by a girl who sounds about the same age as his sister, despite being born and brought up in the same village, never once lapse from their apple-pie accents. The writing is laughable and the borrowing of lines from better productions only serves to point it up; "time to die" had more credible menace on the lips of Roy Batty in **BLADE RUNNER**, and the "I love you" - "I know" exchange twice used in the **STAR WARS** trilogy by Han and Leia didn't fit so well for Doris and D.

I'm not saying that every anime film dubbed into English has to have writing reminiscent of the best in Western literature and acting to match; but it does seem to me that popular entertainment ought not to use that label as an excuse for work that can only be popular with or entertaining to the completely indiscriminating consumer. The public may well be prepared to accept this kind of thing, especially while the company offering it is the only one in its field at present, but that doesn't mean that better dubbing can't or shouldn't be attempted.

RIDING BEAN - Anime Projects

Sonoda Ken-ichi's name guarantees the attention of fans worldwide. **RIDING BEAN** is one of his favourite projects, set in Chicago in the approximate present and featuring fast cars, a wacky anti-hero and a quirky supporting cast. AnimEigo's subtitling is clear and reads well; though there are places where the translation departs from the sense of the Japanese, it doesn't cause any problem with story continuity.

Bean Bandit's laidback partnership with Rally and his casual attitude to his work as a contract driver for various crooks make for an easy life, complicated when psychobitch Semmerling (which is also, incidentally, the name of her gun) decides to frame him for her own kidnap of a rich man's child. The laid-back exterior, however, hides a well-developed sense of self-preservation and a determination to get even. The clashes with the police department, and in particular the car chase and final shootout at the end of the film, provide

a combination of silliness and tension which makes an entertaining cocktail. The only genuinely nasty and disturbing element is Semmerling's relationship with her young partner in crime, in which child abuse in the context of a sado-masochistic relationship is all too clearly indicated. I have to admit that it makes me very, very nervous. Yes, it's very obvious from this who the baddie really is, and the dramatic effect is undeniable, but it's so precisely done and so very believable that for a few minutes **RIDING BEAN** stops being entertaining and reality runs its cold, unwelcome finger down my spine. Like the sickening fork-in-the-foot sequence in **ARMOUR HUNTER MELLOWLINK**, I can see why it's there but maybe I'd rather it wasn't.

For those less squeamish and literal-minded, **RIDING BEAN** offers a well-written, fast-paced and very enjoyable experience. That one note of reality may lift it to another level, or may be entirely spurious; decide for yourself. Don't miss it - but don't watch it with your kid sister. (完)

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TEKKAMAN BLADE

TEKKAMAN BLADE © Tatsunoko



By Pat Munson-Siter

BACKGROUND: TEKKAMAN BLADE is a new animated TV series from Tatsunoko. Back in the early 1980's, Tatsunoko did a series called

TEKKAMAN THE SPACE KNIGHT. It didn't last that long - 26 episodes, I think. An American company (maybe Sandy "Stank" (Frank), who also did "Battle of the Planets", but I'm not sure) dubbed about 13 episodes, renowned mostly for bad voice acting speaking absolutely dumb dialog - the problem wasn't so much in the translation, though, as it was that the original Japanese TEKKAMAN series was incredibly dumb! Tatsunoko has taken some of the concepts and mecha designs from that earlier series, and completely re-written the storyline, background and characters. The result is a far better series than the one it was based on, and is in my opinion one of the better S-F animated TV series to come out of Japan in recent years.

The series takes place in a not too distant future Earth. (It takes place in Federation Space Calendar year 192; but so far I haven't seen anything that tells me what year we're talking about by our own old-fashioned calendar - I don't know if FSC year 1 is the year Sputnik was launched, the first manned orbiters went up, the year man first stepped on the moon, or what...I suspect it would start with one of those events, so this is somewhere around 140 to 170 years in our future, perhaps. Technology and culture-wise it 'feels' a lot closer to present day than that would indicate, though.) Terrans had built an orbiting, manned, armed and armored ring around the planet - it isn't made plain if the ring was used to help maintain peace on Earth, intended for use to protect the planet from outside forces, or a combination of both. (We'll ignore the fact that building such a huge space station would take far more material to build than available to humans even if they used every scrap of metal ore on both the Moon and Earth - maybe they went out to the asteroids and dragged hundreds of large asteroids back to use in making this thing??) They call it the "Orbital Ring" - real original name there, right? Unfortunately an alien species called the Radamu - looking like nothing so much as stereotypical "bug eyed monsters" or BEMS - attacks, overwhelming the defenses of the ring. (Actually, the more spider-like Radamu warriors remind me somewhat of Heinlein's descriptions of the "Bug" warriors in his novel Starship Troopers.) Then the enemy turns the ring against the Earth it was designed to protect. The weapons of the ring

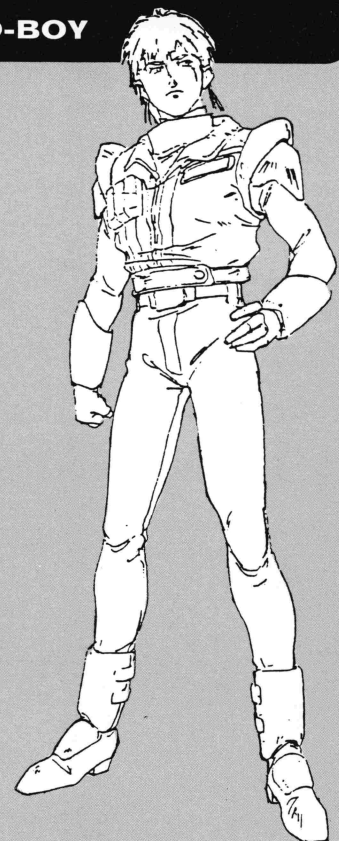
fire down against the planet, joined by a rain of alien spores that then proceed to dig into the ground, releasing various gases. They are gradually turning our atmosphere into something the aliens find more compatible. The fact that humans and other Terran lifeforms find the resulting air poisonous is, as far as the aliens are concerned, a bonus. Two military organizations still remain active and continue the fight against the aliens. The first are the "Space Knights", whose duties were to help protect the Earth from outside invasions. Many of them were killed in the initial battles with the aliens. They are still racked with guilt about their inability to protect their homeworld from the alien invasion force. The other is the Earth Defense Force, a land-based force whose original duties seemed to have mostly been acting as a global police force - they were the ones responsible for keeping various arguments between countries on the planet exploding into full-fledged war. They were much more powerful, numerically, monetarily, and materially than the much smaller but elite Space Knights. The EDF never miss a chance to rub in the failure of the Space Knights to stop the aliens' advances. The forces who were on the orbital ring seem to have been mostly EDF forces, but I think I saw a few Space Knight uniforms among the dead as well.

The events chronicled in the series start about one year after the aliens first arrived. More and more of the Earth's atmosphere is being changed into poison by the alien spores. One of the jobs the Space Knights now carry out is monitoring the spread of the spores. A Space Knight team is gathering such information as the series opens. In orbit somewhere above them, a humanoid-shaped, armored mecha is battling the aliens. Then it is attacked by a similar mecha, and the second one names the first one "Tekkaman Blade" and "Traitor". The second mecha is identified by the first during their subsequent battle as "Tekkaman Dagger". As a result of the battle, Blade is damaged and falls into a descending orbit.

The Space Knight teams goes to investigate the resulting meteoric fireball. A naked humanoid crawls out of the crater and collapses. This is how Tekkaman Blade comes into contact with his future allies, the Space Knights...

TEKKAMAN BLADE/"D-BOY": So far the series seems to indicate that the aliens have captured several humans, mind-wiped them and trained them to lead their forces in taking the Earth. Blade has somehow managed to overcome some of that brain-washing, although he has no memory of who he was before he woke up among the aliens. He has realized that he is human, like the Terrans he was supposed to fight. He turns against his masters. The Space Knights name him "D-Boy", short for "Dangerous Boy". They do their best to discover how his strange armor works, hoping to be able to develop copies of their own that they can use in the battle against the invaders. D-Boy is somewhat lost at first, but luckily finds a home among the Space Knights fairly quickly - I suspect he was on the edge of insanity there for a while, and it is the anchor of the relationships he forms among the Space Knights that brings him back from that edge. Even so, D-Boy is still a bit too close to that brink for comfort! He tends to be too over-eager for battle for either his or his partners' good, and he has a temper that he must learn to control. He tends to be a bit overemotional - perhaps as a result of the mind-bending the aliens committed against him. He is not sure quite how to handle the emotions he is experiencing, and has no idea at all about how to react to Rebin's teasing. He hates the aliens totally, even more than the humans who have been fighting them since they attacked the Earth. He is approximately 18 years of

D-BOY



age, and seemingly was kidnapped by the aliens while quite young - evidently the BEMs have been planning their invasion for quite some time! D-Boy has black hair and grey-green eyes; he has a nasty scar that he acquired during the battle with Tekkaman Dagger during the first episode that extends both below and above his left eye - bisecting his eyebrow and missing taking out his eye by scant millimeters. According to the articles in the anime 'zines, his real name is Takaya Aihane.

AKI



AKI - One of the Space Knight officers, she is a scientist who is a member of the team that finds D-Boy after he crash-lands on Earth. She is a martial arts expert and quite capable of handling most weapons currently used by the Earth forces. She is level-headed and more mature than her years would indicate. She is 19 years old, has long black hair and green eyes. She seems to be somewhat attracted to the rather naive D-Boy; at the moment this is more a mother-like urge to help protect him than romantic in nature.



EPISODE O: Nagaki Tatakai no Jokyoku = PRELUDE TO A LONG BATTLE

Also known as the "Tekkaman Special", this isn't so much a real episode as an intro into the series, somewhat like the first episode of **ZZ GUNDAM**. In it we are told about the earlier **SPACE KNIGHT TEKKAMAN**, and shown clips from that show. Then we are introduced to the new background, characters, and mecha of the new series. Frankly, the comparison between the animation of the two series can be painful at times, as the **SPACE KNIGHT TEKKAMAN** had rather limited animation and extremely angular artwork. Of interest I'm sure to completists; but if you have no desire to learn more about the first **TEKKAMAN** series you will be bored by this "Special Opening Episode."

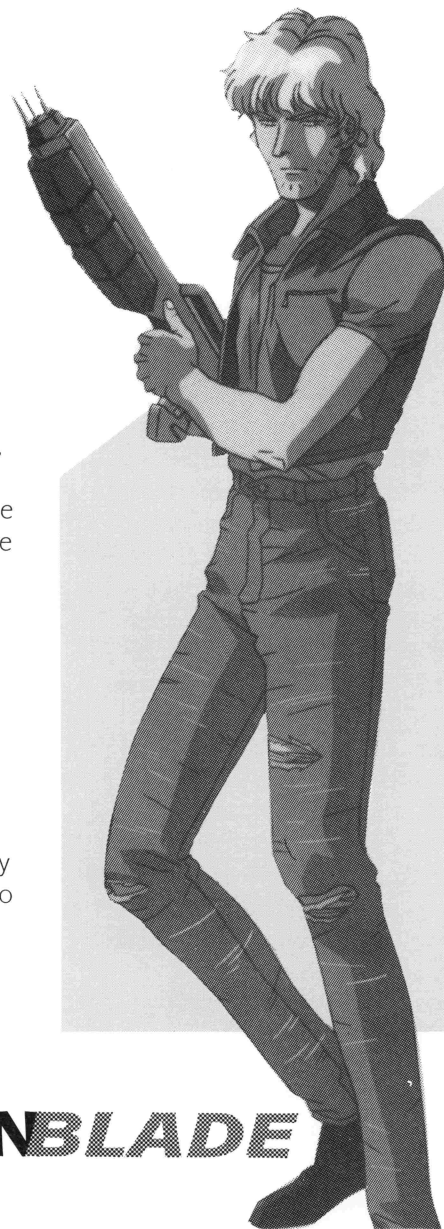
TEKKAMAN BLADE

Episodes 1-16

1

Tenkakeru Chojin A SUPERMAN CHARGES THROUGH THE SKIES

Open to a nasty battle between your stereotypical BEMs (Bug-Eyed Monsters) and a humanoid set of armor done up in red and white, taking place on adamaged satellite station orbiting the planet Earth. The humanoid easily wipes out his insect-like foe. Below, a two-member team from the "Space Knights" - named Aki and Noal - have been dispatched by their Commander, Chief Freeman, to check monitoring equipment that has been recording information on how rapidly the spores planted on the surface of the Earth by the aliens are growing and the rate by which they are releasing deadly gases into the terrestrial atmosphere. Above, a second being in humanoid armor joins the battle in progress - fighting against the first humanoid, and calling the white-and-red armor "Tekkaman Blade" and naming him "traitor". Blade calls his foe in return "Tekkaman Dagger".



Blade is badly wounded in the battle and is violently propelled off the satellite, falling into the gravity well of the planet below. "Goodbye, Blade!" Dagger sneers, but Blade calls back, "I will not die!"

Noal and Aki see something that looks like a meteor. Fearing that the aliens have landed some new nastiness, they investigate - only to see a naked, bleeding man stumbling away from the smoking crater. He collapses almost at their feet. Astonished by their find, they take him back to Space Knight headquarters with them. There, medical scans indicate that he is indeed human. When he wakes up, he immediately grabs Miri, who is standing next to him with Noal. He seems to think the humans are themselves aliens, and demands a spaceship to make an escape with. Miri elbows him and ducks away. Freeman speaks, and the young man agrees to listen. He tells them he cannot remember his own name, nor can he remember where he comes from. Alarms go off; the alien foe is attacking

an Australian defense base. Finally convinced that he is indeed on Earth and not undergoing some strange sort of interrogation by the enemy, the man tells his rescuers that he still needs a spaceship so he can go back and finish his battle with the enemy overhead. Miri ups and tells him where the launch bay is. The young man runs off, and ends up terrorizing Rebin when he needs more information on how to get to the ships. Freeman orders Noal and Aki to follow him.

Noal names the young man "D-Boy" and explains to Aki that it's short for "Dangerous Boy". Aki agrees that it seems to be an appropriate name for their apparent ally. They arrive on board the ship - the "Blue Earth" - too late to stop lift-off, but arrive in the cockpit in time to take over before the aliens can shoot up the ship too badly - D-Boy can't pilot and fire the ship's weapons at the same time. They are shocked as D-Boy ducks into the airlock and opens it as the aliens attack, a strange crystalline device in his hand. A light shoots away from their ship, resolving into D-Boy's form as he calls the Tekkaman Blade armor to him, and the bizarre transformation process begins as the two startled Space Knights watch. The "change crystal" - a four-armed crystal that is just large enough to be easily held in the hand - expands and encases D-Boy. He jets out of the air lock as his clothes disintegrate due to the energy release. The armor slowly forms about D-Boy's body inside the crystal, then crystal disappears as the Tekkaman Blade transformation is complete. Tekkaman then stands on the prow of the "Blue Earth", smashing enemy aliens as the space ship heads for the captured defense station...

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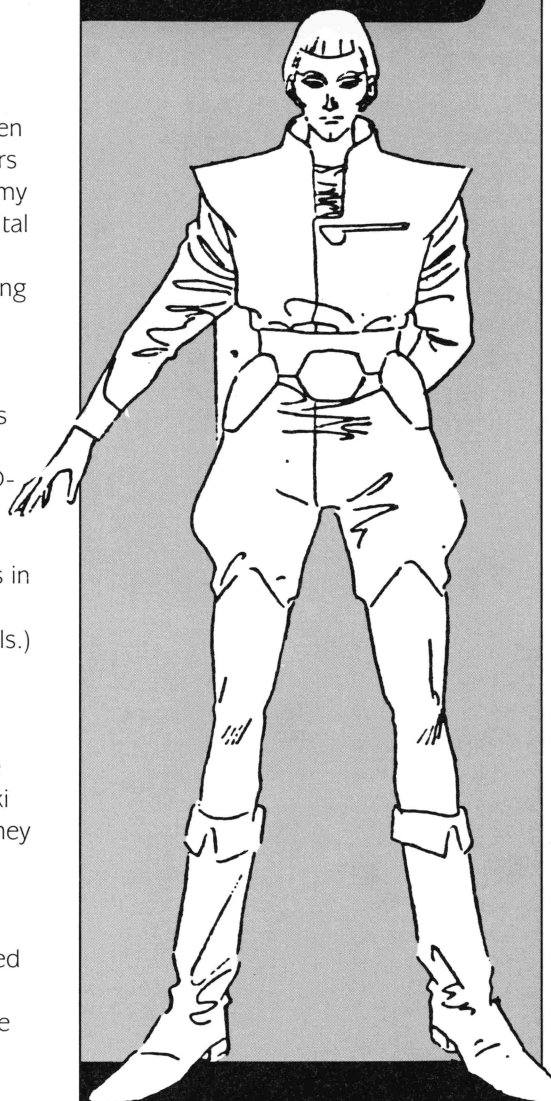
Kodoku no Senshi
**LONELY
WARRIOR**

D-Boy, now transformed into the humanoid, armored warrior Tekkaman Blade, flies on ahead of the "Blue Earth". Noal pilots the spacecraft desperately through enemy fire, as Aki demonstrates how well she can handle the space ship's weapons. Blade attacks the aliens single-mindedly, calling them "the damned Radum". Freeman is watching Blade's progress through the communications link the Space Knights have with their spaceship. Elsewhere, General Colbert of the Earth Defense Force has also become aware of the battle and is

watching as well. He is intrigued by what he thinks is the Space Knights' new weapon system. The battle continues in earnest. To a certain extent Blade and the "Blue Earth" provide cover for each other, but even Noal's outstanding evasive maneuvers can't avoid all the concentrated enemy fire. He is forced to land on the orbital ring. Blade enters the ship and collapses, his armor dissolving, leaving him naked once more. Aki and Noal get him dressed again and start feeding him. It seems the Tekkaman Blade armor uses the life force of its wearer for much of its power. Therefore, after using it in contact D-Boy is both exhausted and starving. (Sort of like the reaction mages experience after casting major spells in Mercedes Lackey's Valdemar/Oathbound series of novels.) Noal is singularly unimpressed and bitches about the nasty situation D-Boy has gotten them all into. They haven't been able to repair the "Blue Earth" and are unable to take off. Aki suggests breaking into the station they are sitting on and seeing if they can find any parts they can use to make repairs.

They fight their way into the captured satellite, in the hopes of sabotaging the weapons systems the aliens have turned against the Earth as well as trying to find replacement parts for their engines. They are horrified to find the mummified bodies of the dead human crew still floating in the vacuum that has replaced the air of the station. They discover a chamber that has been turned into what appears to be an alien "nest" with clusters of eggs webbed to walls, ceiling, and floor. The chamber is protected, as Tekkaman Dagger is hiding within an egg cluster and attacks them. D-Boy sends Aki and Noal through a door and locks it after them, turning into Blade to face this old foe. They fight as the two Space Knights return to their ship. Blade damages Dagger's eye, temporarily distracting the enemy. He returns to the "Blue Earth" and uses his own propulsion system to lift the damaged ship off the satellite and put it into a deorbiting trajectory. As they leave, Dagger tries to attack once more but Blade beats him to the punch. Blade floats unconscious as the "Blue Earth" returns to pick him up. Colbert monitors the situation and thinks that he may be able to put the Space Knight's new weapon to good use himself...

CHIEF FREEMAN



CHIEF FREEMAN: Commander of the Space Knights, he is an albino with white-blond hair and red eyes. He frequently sports a pair of dark glasses to help protect his sensitive eyes from harsh light. He is very thin and is 35 years of age. He has a somewhat adversarial relationship with General Colbert, the leader of the EDF. His uniform and hair style remind me a bit of several members of the enemy forces in IDEON. His facial structure, hair color, and character however seem to be based on the Commander Straker character played by Ed Bishop in Gerry Anderson's U.F.O. series. (Further, in UFO, Straker's second in command was a Colonel Freeman...and Chief Freeman's relationship with General Colbert is very much like that Straker had with General Henderson, who headed the agency Straker was responsible to! It should be noted that UFO is fairly popular in Japan; they've even released a Japanese subtitled laser disk collection of the old British TV series, so I suspect this is more than a coincidence.) Freeman is an entirely capable commander and his Space Knights - and soon D-Boy - are devoted to him.

3

**Boeigun no Yabo
TREACHERY (AMBITION) OF
THE DEFENSE FORCE**

The "Blue Earth" returns to home base. Miri, Rebin, and Honden are eagerly awaiting the return of their comrades. It seems Rebin has become quite taken with the young "D-Boy", to the amusement of his/her comrades. Freeman also arrives, and convinces the young man to allow them to closely examine not only him but also the crystal. Exams confirm that D-Boy is indeed human, but there have been some operations performed on him to alter some of his body functions. Exams of the crystal reveal little, aside from indicating that it's an alien artefact, not originating on Earth. Freeman shows D-Boy some preserved alien spores and alien bodies. The humans are trying to find a way to negate the effects the spores are having on Earth's atmosphere. The two discuss things, but D-Boy cannot tell him much about the aliens themselves; his memory has been too badly disrupted for him to remember much even about his training in how to use the Tekkaman system let alone information about the aliens themselves.

Colbert arrives at the Space Knight base, demanding that Freeman turn over the Tekkaman Blade system to the Earth Defense Forces. Colbert threatens to destroy the Space Knights for keeping the new weapon system to themselves. Freeman refuses. Colbert's men pull out guns but Freeman refuses to be intimidated. Colbert shows him that the base is surrounded by EDF tanks and guns. EDF troops are spread throughout the base...Freeman asks D-Boy to come up to the control center, along with Noal and Aki. Colbert gloats and grabs D-Boy, but D-Boy shakes him off. Noal calls Colbert several names, and gets guns poked in his back for his efforts. Freeman asks D-Boy if he wants to go with the EDF but D-Boy refuses. He tells Colbert what he thinks of his plans. Colbert has his tanks fire on the Space Knight base, but both Freeman and D-Boy stand fast. Then the head of the Earth Council contacts them, and tells Colbert to back off.

"Tekkaman is best utilized using Space Knight forces." D-Boy agrees to take on EDF missions so long as he is allowed to stay with the Space Knights. They are then dispatched back

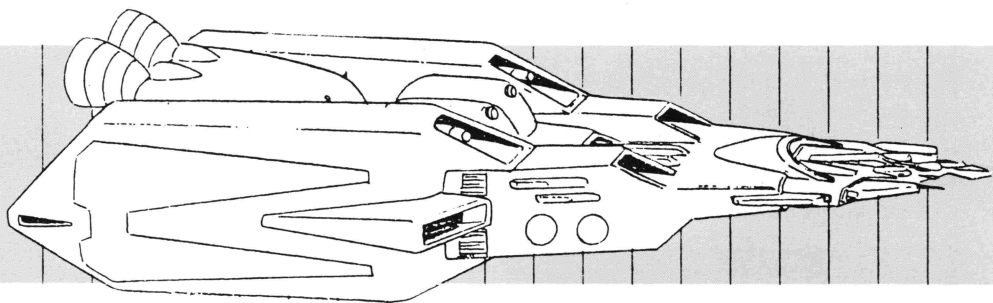
into space, where alien forces are hidden inside a piece of falling satellite, using its armored shell to protect them from the heat generated by re-entry. D-Boy transforms into Blade, and battle is once more joined as the "Blue Earth" also strikes at the piece of Trojan-Horse space debris. They are successful. The Space Knights celebrate while Freeman smiles in satisfaction. Colbert leaves, muttering under his breath and already planning on how to best get even with Freeman and Tekkaman Blade...

4

**Riyu Naki Tekizen Tobo
A SENSELESS DESERTION IN
THE FACE OF THE ENEMY**

Noal is playing cards with Rebin and Honden, while Rebin tries to pump Noal about D-Boy. Noal tries to run a bluff but is called on it by both his companions. To their embarrassment, they realize that D-Boy has overheard their gossiping. Aki takes D-Boy to one of the monitoring stations, telling him about the alien attack during which the human's orbiting stations were captured, much of the Earth's population wiped out, and the seeding of the alien spores in Terran soil as they travel over the ravaged landscape. The Space Knights are still demoralized by their failure to protect the Earth from this alien menace. Tekkaman has to an extent given them some hope that they may eventually be able to defeat the enemy. Landing, D-Boy gets

alarms go off, announcing another alien incursion. They are using a new, winged form of alien in this most recent attack. With Noal at the command seat, and Aki and D-Boy manning weapons and sensor stations, the "Blue Earth" takes off once more. As they approach the battle area, D-Boy goes to the lock and transforms into Tekkaman Blade once more. (By now that same transformation sequence is beginning to get a bit boring; shortly most viewers will be fast-forwarding through it as quickly as possible!) This new form of alien proves a much more difficult foe to defeat, and Blade is shortly in a good bit of trouble, being crushed in the talons of one of the winged foe. He manages to struggle free but at great cost. Hundreds more winged aliens appear. Aki opens the air lock to let the badly wounded D-Boy back into the ship. Unable to strap in before Noal has to do some frantic evasive maneuvers, Aki is thrown off her feet and hits her head against the corner of a wall. Noal makes a controlled-crash landing and finds both Aki and D-Boy unconscious. Frantic, he's far more worried about Aki than D-Boy, and once they get back to base knocks the younger man around, blaming him for Aki's injury. "If she hadn't had to get out of her seat to let you in, she wouldn't have been hurt! It's your fault!" he's screaming as the episode ends, Aki in a coma in sickbay.



his first up-close look at the alien spores as Aki conducts her tests. Above them they can see the silvery ribbon that is the captured orbital defense ring. Aki agonizes a little that they still haven't been able to find a way to destroy the spores. Noal, Rebin and Honden are still playing and arguing. Noal wins a watch off of Honden during the game, which he will hold until Honden can pay him off - or wins it back. Honden makes Noal promise that he'll be careful and not break the watch. Aki and D-Boy have returned to base. Once more, the

5

**Ore o Korose
KILL
ME!**

Aki is still out cold in sickbay, and the doctors can't say how long she's going to be in the coma. There is a meeting of the Space Knights during which Freeman tries to pry out of D-Boy what he knows about the aliens. D-Boy doesn't remember enough to be helpful. Their meeting is interrupted by a call from Colbert. It seems a new type of alien has been developed, and they are wreaking havoc on the EDF planes. He wants Tekkaman Blade to

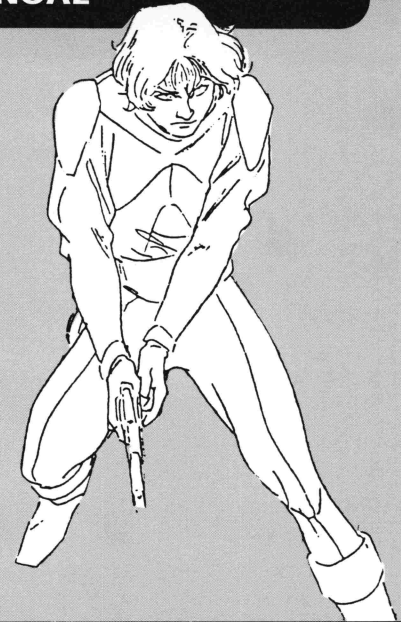
go out against them. The tension between the EDF and the Space Knights is palpable during the visphone confrontation. The others are worried that the task will be too much for the still weakened D-Boy; Noal still blames him for Aki's injury and basically says he hopes Blade will pay for what he's done to the woman. Miri tells him off, but Noal brushes the comments off and roughs up D-Boy again before stalking off to sulk. Rebin and Honden are in charge of the team repairing the "Blue Earth." Noal is watching over Aki from an observation room while brooding when Blade comes in and apologizes to the unconscious woman because his actions have endangered her and led to her being injured. D-Boy then leaves, and Miri finds him looking morosely at the stars overhead. They talk for a little while, and D-Boy tells her a little about why he's fighting the aliens.

Shortly the repaired "Blue Earth", D-Boy, Miri and Noal on board, are taking off to return to the battered defense satellite ring. D-Boy departs to the lock and once more transforms into Tekkaman Blade. He immediately starts fighting aliens who want to abort his mission for him. The Space Knights watch anxiously as he battles on. Colbert watches but is gloating - it's almost as if he WANTS Blade to fail and be killed. Miri is worried as Blade stays in Tekkaman armor longer and longer; Noal seems indifferent - then Blade is captured by several of the aliens just as his power resources are beginning to burn out. Then Noal starts to show his worry, and takes in the "Blue Earth" to help Blade out. Blade then uses the "Blue Earth" as sort of a combat chariot, as the space ship heads for the mass of alien - "egg sack" is the best term I can come up with - which the Tekkaman armor tries to take out unsuccessfully. Noal uses the "Blue Earth"s lasers to finish the job, after some soul searching about whether he should blast Tekkaman Blade as well. Upon their return Noal is knocked about by Honden as he's damaged the watch given to him as collateral earlier that episode. Aki finally wakes up, although still confined to sick bay. Noal joins D-Boy on the roof to watch the stars, as the two start to come to terms with their antagonism. On Luna, a figure who will later be introduced to us as Tekkaman Omega contemplates the problem Blade has turned into, and begins plans to eliminate the traitor.



NOAL - Another Space Knight officer, he was the second member of the team that found D-Boy; it is Noal that gave the amnesiac young man his new name. He is one of the hottest pilots in the Space Knights, and a bit of a card shark and gambler. At 20 years old, good looking and blond, he tends to be a bit overconfident at times and displays a bad tendency to lose his temper. He feels a bit adversarial toward D Boy at first, at least in part because he's got a crush on Aki and is somewhat jealous of her affection for the young man. However, he soon finds an initially grudging respect for D-Boy, and in time they become friends.

NOAL

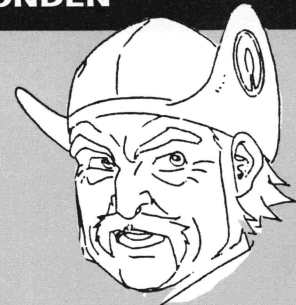


REBIN



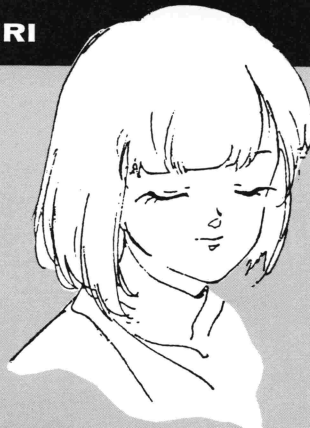
REBIN: A computer whiz, Rebin is an androgynous bishonen of the sort we haven't seen for a while. I think Rebin is a male transvestite - several articles in the anime magazines refer to him by a term which can mean transvestite, transexual, or even gay. Even the Japanese seem a bit confused as they refer to him in one or two places as "she" - but I suspect this is in the way you might call a male transexual "she" when dressed in women's clothing. Rebin seems to be a male who enjoys looking very feminine. It's hard to tell from the episodes I've seen, and the magazine articles are deliberately fuzzy on the subject. The voice actor has a mid range voice that could belong to either a male or female character. Rebin seems to have developed something of a crush on D-Boy and tends to pursue him with almost adolescent enthusiasm. 19 years old, red hair and brown eyes.

HONDEN



HONDEN: An older man, he seems to be an engineer or technician of some kind. He is also quite fond of Rebin and frequently acts as the young bishonen's protector. Loves to play poker and can often be found playing that game with Noal and Rebin. His age isn't given in the articles I have.

MIRI



MIRI - Chief communications officer for the Space Knights, she is only 16 and can at times act rather childishly - yet at other times may see things more clearly than anyone else. I think she's sort of the "mascot" that each of this type of show usually has; as such she seems to be better than most of that ilk. She has shoulder-length brown hair and blue eyes.

6 Tekkusetto Funo
**TEKKAMAN CHANGE
IMPOSSIBLE**

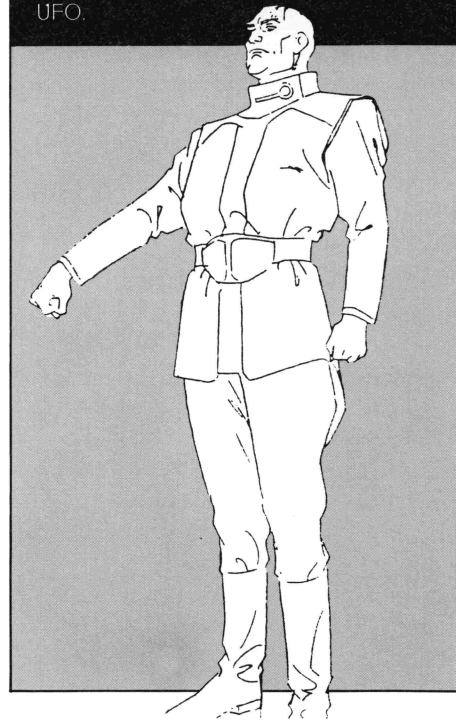
Tekkaman Omega is talking to Tekkaman Dagger, as Dagger apologizes for failing to stop Tekkaman Blade and explaining his current plans to kill Blade. Back at the Space Knight base, the "Blue Earth" is once more being repaired - an on-going process. Freeman is briefing his team on their next mission. The "Blue Earth" is spaceborn once more, with Aki, Noal, and D-Boy on board. Aki is somewhat surprised by the accord Noal and D-Boy seem to have reached - there is still some hostility there, but mostly they are making sarcastic jokes to one another instead of taking full-bore potshots. The "Blue Earth" enters a section of the enemy-held defense satellite station. D-Boy puts on a spacesuit and goes out to look for clues that will help them defeat the enemy. Instead he is trapped by Dagger - who is revealed in this episode to be human, just like D-Boy/Blade is. Aki and Noal have been monitoring the confrontation over the communicator D-Boy is wearing. Dagger calls up his armor using a five-armed crystal like

D-Boy's. When D-Boy tries to change, Dagger activates a force field which discharges through the change crystal, and Blade screams in agony as the backlash hits him. For a moment he is frozen inside the crystal, which goes black.

Dagger gloats - his plan has worked. The discharge prevents D-Boy from transforming into Tekkaman Blade; and the more often he tries to change the more damage will be done to the change crystal. Aki wants to go charging off to the rescue right away; but Noal persuades her their best strategy is to wait. Dagger goes after D-Boy aggressively, blood in his eye, armored weapon against unarmed human foe. D-Boy finally finds momentary refuge in a shattered tunnel, but his conversation with Aki on the communicator gives away his hiding place and he must run again. The communicator is broken in the subsequent beating. D-Boy runs and finally finds an air lock to escape through. (Whoever did this bit didn't know proper English; "AIR LOCK" is rendered "AIR ROCK"!!!) He tries to change into Blade again as he is swept out into the vacuum, but the transmitter is still blocking the change - and he is paralyzed inside the change crystal, a vulnerable target - at least when the change crystal goes inert again he's still in a spacesuit rather than in the nude... Noal decides to take the "Blue Earth" out. He and Aki see the transmitter built outside the satellite station and correctly deduce it is the reason for Blade's difficulties. The "Blue Earth" destroys the transmitter (It's interesting to note that this time it's NOAL who's screaming D-Boy's name as they go to the rescue!). D-Boy makes the transformation successfully this time, but Dagger gloats - the crystal will be badly damaged and D-Boy may not be able to turn into Blade again - yet the Tekkaman armor uses up too much energy for D-Boy to remain Blade indefinitely. Sooner or later he will have to return to human form, and when he does he will be unable to become Tekkaman Blade again. Blade escapes to the "Blue Earth". He tells them of his dilemma - and Noal tells him he must return to human form; staying as Blade isn't worth the risk of letting him die. "You're one of us now; you are more than just that suit of armor," Noal says. Exhausted, D-Boy must obey - and the crystal breaks apart as it returns to its inert form.

GENERAL COLBERT

GENERAL COLBERT - Leader of the Earth Defense Force, he seems almost as much interested in gathering more power to himself as trying to free Earth from the aliens. He at one point even threatens to destroy the Space Knights' base if they don't hand Tekkaman Blade over to him! (Yes, eventually he agrees to let Blade stay with them, so long as he has some say in which missions the "new weapon" is sent on...) He is a large, almost fat bald man who reminds me both physically and in character of General Henderson, a major supporting character in the old British SF series, UFO.



7 Kedohei Pegasus
**LAUNCH OF THE MOBILE
UNIT PEGAS**

D-Boy is considerably upset over the damage to the change crystal; too much of what he is is tied up in his ability to become Tekkaman Blade for him to remain calm about losing that power. He feels useless, unable to do anything to help his new teammates as the aliens attack in force. Colbert is steaming because Freeman cannot call up Tekkaman Blade, saying it's "Won't" not "Can't". Freeman tells him it's his fault - he forced the Space Knights to use the Tekkaman System too often, too heavily for the fragile human within the Blade armor. Rebin and Honden are working like maniacs trying to find a way to repair the change crystal. Aki and Noal try to cheer D-Boy up, Noal using sarcasm as a weapon to cut through D-Boy's depression. Aki slaps D-Boy when he says no one really cares about him - all



they care about is Blade. Without Blade, he is nothing -- Aki then drags him off to watch Rebin working on the change crystal. "We're doing this for YOU, not for the damned armor!" he's told. "Don't worry, we'll get it running sooner or later!" Rebin assures him. Then the alarm bells sound as another alien attack approaches. The Space Knights are summoned to the command center. A message comes through from the Radamu - it's Dagger, demanding that Blade meet him in battle - or they will continue the attack, destroying the ancient wonders of the Earth whole-sale. D-Boy agrees to go. As he waits for D-Boy to arrive, Dagger realizes that if he fails this time, his masters probably won't allow him to live...one way or another, this battle will be to the death. Noal runs to the command center a little later, where the Knights are gathered around Freeman. It seems D-Boy has gone off to fight Dagger by himself, this time in a small one-man rocket. Miri stumbles into Rebin's computer, and by accident inputs the right data that will allow them to design a device that will enable D-Boy to transform into Blade with a damaged change crystal. D-Boy, without a weapon (not even a side-arm...is he so tied up with Blade that he doesn't think a pistol might come in handy if he can't use the Blade transformation?) is busy fighting Dagger, mostly dodging various blows and trying to make sure the resulting shrapnel doesn't hole his space suit. The "Blue Earth" arrives like the cavalry, just as Dagger has D-Boy cornered. They drive Dagger away momentarily, and then take D-Boy on board, where they show him "Pegas" - a huge humanoid-shape device, the change crystal in its chest. The Pegas opens, D-Boy gets inside, and the energy of the Pegas keeps the crystal under enough pressure that D-Boy can successfully change into Tekkaman Blade. Further, the Pegas then can be used like a space sled, so Blade doesn't have to use his own energy to travel. Dagger is considerably alarmed by the fact Blade is now in his armor (I think he's realized that he's no competition for D-Boy when transformed into Tekkaman Blade). Blade attacks full throttle with a multi laser cannon launch that seems to eliminate Dagger completely. On Luna, Tekkaman Omega watches and broods. "This is only the first battle, not the war, Blade," he says quietly.

8 Nazo no Jugun Kisha
THE MYSTERIOUS WAR CORRESPONDENT

The enemy forces continue to multiply in the Orbital Ring, and begin using the Ring's weaponry even more aggressively than before. Colbert is frantic - somehow, somewhere the enemy has found a way to increase the energy reserves of the Ring. His aide recommends asking the Space Knights to send Tekkaman Blade to investigate. Colbert about has apoplexy - he's tired of relying on the Space Knights to do the work he thinks the EDF should be doing, and curses Freeman for "hoarding" the Tekkaman technology. "We've got to have a Tekkaman system of our own!" he rages. Suddenly a nasty grin crosses his lips.



Shortly thereafter, a blond, bearded military journalist shows up at the Space Knight's base. We become aware in just a few minutes that he's certainly no ordinary correspondent. Honden and D-Boy are working at repairing and expanding the capabilities of Pegas as Miri and Rebin monitor their work. The correspondent then shows up, introduces himself as "Journalist/Cameraman Bartok", and tells them he's been assigned to file a report on the Tekkaman "crew". Honden takes an immediate dislike to the man, but they are interrupted by a Red Alert. Freeman briefs Noal, Aki and D-Boy about the renewed problems with the Orbital Ring and Colbert's current request. He tells them about the array of laser cannon on the ring, and how the aliens seem to have been able to increase the power output - and thus add to the destructiveness - of the weapons. Bartok tells them he's supposed to go along with them in the Blue Earth to report on a space mission. He asks D-Boy to tell him more about his background, and Aki chews him out for being impolite. Freeman has already begun to suspect the man is Colbert's spy, and agrees to

let him go along. The Blue Earth takes off with an extra passenger as a result. D-Boy finds him taking pictures of Pegas, and the correspondent then continues to needle D-Boy. He then enters Pegas as Bartok watches, and then Pegas drops down out of the ship's bay - they have succeeded in installing a propulsion system into the humanoid robot. Once space borne, the Tekkaman transformation finishes and Pegas releases Blade for combat. As he leads the Radamu forces away, the crew of the Blue Earth head for the ring area where the laser controls are. Blade gleefully demolishes the enemy as Bartok watches with some awe.

The ship lands on the Orbital Ring, and the three - including the correspondent - head for the laser system control room. They are attacked by Radamu enroute, and only Blade's arrival saves them. They discover that the laser controls are enveloped inside a gelatinous alien blob, which seems to be both feeding more power to the system and controlling it. Aki warns that Blade must take care in defending them here and trying to cut through the blob; if the controls are damaged the lasers will start firing uncontrollably and will wreak even more havoc on Earth. Blade orders Pegas to approach the blob and lift it off the control consoles as D-Boy continues to deal with more Radamu warriors. One of the warriors gets through and, while trying to attack the humans, damages the computer controls. Aki works frantically to abort the random-fire program for the lasers, but it is the correspondent who pushes her aside and actually manages to shut them down. Blade blasts more Radamu as his comrades return to the Blue Earth, and Bartok brushes off their questions as to how he got the knowledge to delete the firing program. When they return to base, Bartok files his first report...but not to any news agency, we suspect!

9 Kyushutsu! Mokusei Crew
RESCUE! JUPITER CREW
(RESCUE THE JUPITER CREW)

Honden and D-Boy are repairing the damaged hull of the Blue Earth when Miri summons the team for another mission briefing. Rebin trips over Bartok and chews him out. Freeman shows them videotapes from a space satellite that has captured the images of a fleet of Earth-built supply vessels

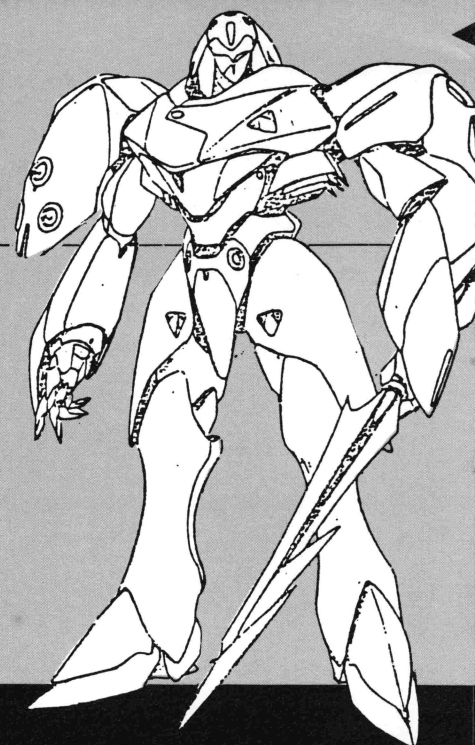
coming into Earth orbit. It seems a man named Dr. Carl was dispatched before the Radamu arrived to the asteroids around Jupiter, where he was put in charge of a mining operation. His fleet of supply ships is only now returning to Earth, it having taken several years for him to get to the asteroids, commence with mining operations, and then return. Unknown to the others, Freeman knows Carl very well. Carl had warned of the possibility of an attack, and Colbert had ignored him. Freeman, then Colbert's aide, was sent to make sure Carl went on his mission, and witnessed the man's tearful farewell to his family. Shortly Blue Earth and her crew is space bound once more, heading out to meet the fleet and attempt to protect it from Radamu predation. Soon they have boarded the lead ship and have introduced themselves to Dr. Carl. He asks for information about his family but they can give him none. After a brief break for tea, Carl takes them into the ship and shows them some of the defenses he's built into the craft. Later, Noal and Aki wonder if the defenses will be enough to defeat the Radamu, while D-Boy broods. The Radamu arrive in force. Carl continues to plow on through them, activating the ships' defenses. D-Boy becomes Blade, and the Blue Earth takes off to add its weapons to the protective shield around the supply fleet. Freeman tells them the fleet must get through at any cost, then talks briefly to Carl. Freeman tells him to be careful - and Carl replies that he now knows that his family is dead - what does he have to live for? He will get the fleet down, but if he dies in the process he won't battle Death very hard. The Radamu attack Carl's control cabin. D-Boy fights his way inside, and finds Carl mortally wounded. The man gives D-Boy his bracelet, that contains a picture of him and his family. He asks D-Boy to take it back to Earth, as a way of telling his family he did not forget them. He then dies. They manage to get the fleet safely down. Blade travels down with Dr. Carl's body, as the Radamu clinging to the hulls of the ship are burned up by the heat of re-entry. The others worry momentarily when he does not immediately appear after they land, but Tekkaman finally emerges from the ocean. One of the EDF officers makes a nasty remark about people who weren't there to go through the

fighting with the Radamu. D-Boy looks at Carl's bracelet while he talks, and slugs the officer before storming off.

10 Senka ni Hibiku
A LULLABY ECHOES AMID
THE FIRES OF WAR

Somewhere aboard the Orbital Ring, human forces are still fighting against the Radamu invaders. The humans finally managed to get to a working communications station and let the homeworld know they're still alive and fighting. It seems they are Space Marines, a division of the EDF that maintains a macho pride that tends to mark most Marine forces of any time or age. Freeman tells his crew that they're the ones who have been asked to try and break the Marines free so they can use their transports to return to Earth. They are running out of supplies on the ring, and cannot stay there very much longer. Freeman remarks that this means there may be other small pockets of surviving humanity in various bases and stations in space. He speculates that perhaps D-Boy came from one of those bases, taken over by the Radamu and the survivors brainwashed into serving the aliens. D-Boy says he doesn't know - but it seems a likely explanation. Bartok is still wandering around the base making a nuisance of himself. He's still trying to find out what makes the Tekkaman system work. He, Honden and Rebin watch as Blue Earth takes off once more. Shortly the spaceship has Radamu on its tail as the alien monsters try to destroy this ship that has caused them so much trouble. Blade goes out to fight them off, and the ship continues to the Orbital Ring. Blade joins them, and it is Blade and Pegas who find the Marines first. Blade becomes D-Boy and introduces himself as one of the Space Knights. He talks to the Marine commander - a sergeant who has lost an eye. They argue for a few minutes, but eventually come to an agreement. The sergeant persuades D-Boy to join him in a few glasses of whiskey. D-Boy reluctantly agrees - he's never had alcohol before - and shortly passes out. He wakes to find himself in the arms of Pegas, the sergeant singing "Johnny Boy" in Japanese as the troops accompany them to the Radamu-infested hanger where the Marine's transport ships are docked. Shortly they are involved in full-scale battle, with D-Boy becoming Blade once more. The Marines help save Blade more than once in the

* TEKKAMAN SYSTEM



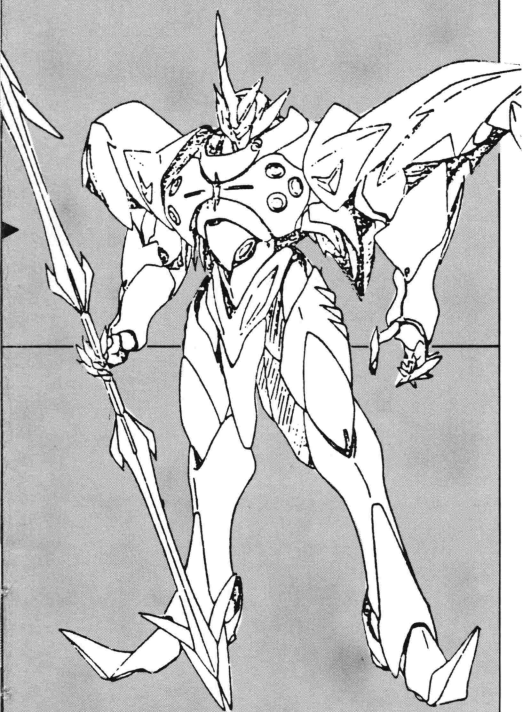
TEKKAMAN EVIL - The second Tekkaman living weapon to be sent against D-Boy. His first appearance is in episode #13. His real name is Shinya, and he is Blade's younger brother. Unfortunately for D-Boy, this means he has a good insight into what Blade's weaknesses are - and Evil uses that knowledge ruthlessly in their battles.

TEKKAMAN RAPIER - Rapier is a young girl, and her real name is Miyuki - she is Blade's younger sister. She doesn't appear in person until episode 20 and up, which I don't have yet. In later episodes she will turn against the Radamu in support of her older brother. While trying to defend the Space Knight's base she is killed (very brutally, according to one friend in Japan who saw the episode) by Tekkamen Evil, Axe, Sword, and Lance.



TEKKAMAN DAGGER - The first of the humans we meet who are fighting for the aliens, he displays a fanatic hatred for Tekkaman Blade. Blade knocks out one of the eyes of Dagger's armor, but Dagger's own eye is not damaged.

TEKKAMAN OMEGA - Only seen briefly so far, he seems to be the commander of the Tekkaman weapons and perhaps is commander of the Radamu (Alien) forces. His armor is not as humanoid as the other Tekkamen; but he is actually Tetuya (another source gives his name as "Kengo"), the older brother of Takaya, Shinya, and Miyuki.



OTHER TEKKAMAN WEAPONS - all appearing after episode 16. Tekkaman New, Lance, Axe and Sword. There is also an "Earth Tekkaman" which seems to be a weapon developed by the humans. (There are indications in the series that the Tekkaman system was being developed by humans, and the research stopped by the war. Somehow the Radamu found out about the experiments and completed them, then used the Tekkaman system against its originators.)

battle, and he returns the favor. At one point the Sarge and Blade talk briefly about honor and the Marine's dedication to duty, as the Sarge says farewell to dead comrades they must leave behind.

They finally reach the ships, and Blade then tries to make sure the launch tubes are kept clear of Radamu as the Marines try to take off. Several ships come close to crashing due to Radamu interference, but in the end all get off safely. Behind them, that section of the Orbital Ring blows up, as the delayed bombs the Marines left behind detonate. Once they return, Honden and Rebin are puzzled by the fact that Pegas is sitting there in its cradle, singing "Johnny Boy", and D-Boy has gone off once more to brood by himself. In a bar downtown, the Sarge and his men are having a celebration - and the Sarge leaves one glass filled for the absent D-Boy.

11 D-Boy Fairu
D-BOY
FILE

This episode is basically a "this is what has gone on before" review of the first ten episodes, as Freeman goes through his "D-Boy" file that contains what the Space Knights now know about their newest recruit.

12 Akai Senritsu Ebiru
THE RED TERROR,
EVIL

Colbert and Freeman are getting briefed on the new ways the Radamu are using the Orbital Ring, as well as a plan to disable at least some of its remaining potential as a weapon against Earth. There a huge laser cannon, which the humans had started and which it seems the Radamu are finishing... Further, they think they may have found a way to reduce if not eliminate the enemy's prolific reproductive capability. They will have to hit four different points on the Orbital Ring at the same time, which means there will have to be at least four two-man ships involved in the project - in addition, of course, to the Blue Knight and her crew. Further, the Space Knights will be providing most of the crews.

Noal is giving the task of selecting the pilots who will be involved in the mission. One pair ends up being the youngest and the oldest of the pilots, and they take some ribbing from Noal and the other pilots. In the Radamu Lunar base, Tekkaman Evil arrives and

receives his orders from Tekkaman Omega. The unspoken "Just you wait, Blade!" is obvious. At the launch site on Earth, the teams assigned to the current operation are taking off, with Blue Earth helping to ride herd on them for the first part of the flight, until they must split up. Soon troops are marching from their transports toward various control centers on the Ring. Tekkaman Blade is launched as well at this point. The Radamu, of course, are fighting back bitterly. Blade has his own goal to reach, and shortly is cutting Radamu warriors to shreds. Soon all the players are in position, and have placed their delayed-detonating bombs into position. Casualties are quite heavy, and Radamu warriors begin attacking the transport ships. The humans begin to try and retreat, as whole sections of the Ring - especially the one where the laser cannon was being finished by the Radamu - fall silent. It seems they even managed to get most of the transports back into space, and a celebration starts - but it has started too soon. Another avenging Radamu force arrives...and one by one the transports are destroyed. All four of the main Space Knight escort vessels are killed off, and many of the transport ships die, too. D-Boy, back on the Blue Earth, knows that this is no ordinary Radamu warrior. Their foes have obviously released yet another Tekkaman weapon. They may have shut down the laser cannon, but the price has been very high.

13 Shukumei no Kyodai
THE DESTINED
SIBLINGS

On the TV news, Colbert is proudly boasting about the most recent successful attack on the Radamu. He pointedly ignores the role the Space Knights played in the operation. At the Space Knight base, Noal bitterly notes the omission. The others talk about the fact the Radamu will be crippled in their efforts for a while; Rebin asks Freeman if they can take advantage of the lull to go "out on the town" for a few hours. Freeman agrees to the request. "A little R&R will help keep your proficiency scores up," he smiles. Mari jumps up and down with joy, and asks Aki to go shopping with her. D-Boy stalks off as the others plan what they're going to do with their "passes"; he has nowhere to go, and doesn't know enough about Earth to be able to enjoy himself. (One also has to





wonder if he's been given much of a pay check yet, all things considered...) In a clothing shop in the town nearest the Space Knight base, a young man with features very much like D-Boy's is dressing. As he leaves the shop, the vacant-eyed clerk slumps off her chair, obviously very dead. Aki and Miri have been doing some heavy-duty shopping, and run into Rebin, who has done the same thing. Noal has been playing soccer with some school boys. As Aki, Miri and Rebin talk, Aki notices the young man we saw in the clothing shop earlier walking by, and mistakes him for D-Boy. He does not answer her hail, and she is much put out by his ignoring her. Back at base, D-Boy is pounding the stuffing out of a punching bag when Honden invites him into his quarters, where Honden shows the youngster his own hobby of wood-carving. The shoppers return, and Aki asks D-Boy why he ignored her. D-Boy denies having even left the base, and Honden backs him up. They wonder who it can be - "He looked enough like you to be your brother!"

Aki says. "What - my brother?!" D-Boy exclaims. "Impossible...." On the cliffside of the island facing the Space Knight base, the strange young man with bright red eyes looks toward the base. "Sooner or later, you'll come to me, Blade!" he thinks. A red star-shape glows on his forehead. (It seems to be the shape of his change crystal.) In the base, a green star the shape of the Blade change crystal glows on D-Boy's forehead. He puts his hand up to it as if it hurts, and then rushes off without a word to his comrades. In the city, the other Tekkaman knows Blade is coming, and strides out to an open area where the Radamu spore plants are blooming in profusion. D-Boy recognizes his enemy as Tekkaman Evil. They exchange angry words for a few minutes, then Evil calls on his armor and attacks. D-Boy calls for Pegas, which hears him (maybe over a radio link?) and takes off from the base on its own - which also indirectly lets the Space Knights know that D-Boy has run into trouble bad enough that he's had to summon the Tekkaman armor! Aki and Noal take off too, following Pegas' trail at Freeman's command. D-Boy is not doing too well against an armored Tekkaman Evil, and has fallen down a cliff. Evil prepares to strike when Pegas arrives and shoots him; then goes down to D-Boy who immediately becomes Tekkaman Blade. The two Tekkaman weapons then fight each other with cold fury. Blue Earth arrives in time to see both Tekkaman having at each other. They realize that this new Tekkaman must be the one the Radamu used against the escort and transport ships in the last operation. As they fight, Evil once or twice called Blade "older brother". Then Blade realizes he has been in the Tekkaman armor almost too long and tries to call Pegas. Evil blocks the way, however, and Blade half-collapses as pain lances through him. Blade fights his way to the surface, but cannot continue to fight as the pain of maintaining the Tekkaman system any longer becomes too much. Noal and Aki arrive, and it takes their weapons to drive Evil off - as much because he has been given the idea for a truly nasty plan which will take some time to put into motion rather than due to fear of Blue Earth's weapons. Pegas lands, and Blade enters to disengage the system. As the robot opens, D-Boy collapses on the ground in a dead faint, and when Aki and Noal wake him he seems to be in a daze.

Tekkaman Evil has returned to the Moon and gleefully shows Tekkaman Omega what happened to Blade when he stayed in the Tekkaman system for too long. Omega agrees with Evil's plan - they must force D-Boy to remain Blade past his time limit, until he is either killed or driven insane by the pain. Back at the Space Knight base, D-Boy is brooding as he looks at a flower arrangement of Easter lilies. Miri tries to cheer him up without much effect. Noal muses that D-Boy is worried about fighting another Tekkaman, one that doesn't need a Pegas to help him change into Blade. D-Boy stalks off (he has learned to "stalk off" quite well!) and Miri runs after him. D-Boy sees a lady and her children, and has a flashback of himself, his brother, and his sister playing in a field. His sister had given him an Easter lily. Then his younger brother turns into Tekkaman Evil. His sister - older now - gives him more flowers, and he remembers that her name is Miyuki. Miri interrupts the half-trance D-Boy is in, just as he speaks his sister's name. She asks who "Miyuki" is. "My younger sister," he tells her. "Miri, you remind me a bit of her." "You have a younger sister?" she asks, startled. "You remember that...have you remembered your name yet?" "No," he has to answer.

They are interrupted by the alert siren - a whole flock of Radamu "fliers" is attacking the city nearby. They are laying waste to the power plant there. The Space Knights wonder why the enemy is here - surely there isn't enough energy in the small power plant to do them much good! Aki, Noal and D-Boy are dispatched. In the shade of a tree, the young man who is Tekkaman Evil watches the destruction. "How long will it take you to get here, Blade?" he asks, an evil smirk on his lips. As he expects, Tekkaman Blade and Pegas arrive shortly. Evil armors up and attacks Blade. This time he has a Radamu "mount" that attacks Pegas; and the Radamu fliers keep the Blue Earth at bay. As the two Tekkamen fight, Evil uses extensive psychological warfare against Blade - "I'm your younger brother, surely you won't harm me? It was YOUR duty to take care of me. Look what I've become - you were my role model, older brother!"

D-Boy is half-freaked by this verbal attack, and has more flashbacks, the distraction of which nearly results in fatal results several times as Evil takes advantage of his brother's loss of concentration. Time passes rapidly, and D-Boy realizes he's been in armor almost too long. He tries to call Pegas, but the Radamu keep the robot away. Evil uses Blade's distraction due to growing pain to wrap a cable around his older brother, and sends an energy barrage through it. The yellow light on Blade's helmet begins to pulse raggedly and faster. Aki and Noal see what's happening but they are being attacked by the Radamu fliers too heavily to break free and help. Blade's light steadies into a constant blaze, and then goes out. Blade stands absolutely still, and his eye-panels turn from green to red. Evil takes off, laughing. Pegas finally lands, as Blade struggles to his feet, offering to remove the armor. Blade screams, and cuts the head off the robot with a single blow. Blade shakes his head, still in agony, and screams, striking out blindly around him as Noal and Aki watch from the air in shock and disbelief.

Inside his head, D-Boy is in full battle with Tekkaman Evil, and everyone and everything around him turns into his enemy. He sees his sister Miyuki again, and even she turns into a Tekkaman - not Tekkaman Evil, but still an enemy. He believes himself in a cavern, tied up by Radamu plants, and sees his brother approaching. "Shinya," he whispers. Then Shinya glows and becomes Evil, attacking and trying to kill his imprisoned brother. In the real world, Blade strikes out against his hallucinations. Colbert is having hysterics, and calls up Freeman to order him to have the Tekkaman system turned off. "There is no way we can do it from the outside," he is told. "Then I'll do it for you! We're trying to evacuate the city he's heading for, but we'll never get all those people out in time. We'll use the most powerful weapons we have to eliminate Tekkaman Blade!" Freeman relays the unpleasant news to Aki and Noal, who are extremely upset. They try and talk to D-Boy in an attempt to get thorough to him, but he attacks them instead. Noal barely evades the attack. An EDF battalion of missile units fires at Blade, but not only is Tekkaman unhurt, but it seems he never even noticed the attack. Colbert orders a small nuclear missile launched. In the Orbital Ring, Evil watches, gloating that he's managed to turn the human's only real defense against them. Freeman orders Aki and Noal to leave the area, but stay close enough to observe. Tekkaman barely notices the blast any more than he did the earlier conventional missiles. Aki and Noal are glad to see D-Boy is still alive, but have to report he's still headed for the city. Colbert is shocked; he had no idea the Tekkaman system was able to stand that powerful an attack. D-Boy is still hallucinating. He sees his older

his older brother turns into Tekkaman Omega...) The ground gives way under him, and Miyuki saves him by grabbing his arm. Then, as he thanks her, she turns into a Tekkaman again (from the material in the anime zines, this time we can see that she has become Tekkaman Rapier.) He falls, and she rescues him again. Then she is killed from behind - by Shinya, who turns into Evil. "Miyuki!" he screams - and overhead, Aki and Noal pick up the words over the radio.

"Miyuki? Who is Miyuki?" they ask. At the base, Miri says, "Miyuki is his younger sister." Suddenly she starts. "I know...perhaps there is a way I can get through to him!" she exclaims. Freeman calls Rebin and Honden, who report they have repaired Pegas. He orders Miri to go out with Pegas and try out her idea. Noal protests, but Freeman tells them they have no other choice but to try it - if Blade is not stopped, the city will die. Miri is a Space Knight, too... Miri lands her transport on the bridge leading into the city, the bridge Blade is now starting across. The young woman walks straight towards D-Boy, begging him to stop, in the name of his sister Miyuki. "She wouldn't want you to do this," she says. Blade picks Miri up and starts to throttle her. In his hallucination, D-Boy sees her become his sister, and drops the unconscious Miri. He backs off, and the red in his eyes goes out - and then Blade collapses. Noal orders Pegas in, and the robot picks up Blade and places him inside its body. Aki and Noal run to Miri, who is waking up. "D-Boy...is he...?" Miri whispers. "He stopped," Aki tells her. Just then Pegas opens up, and D-Boy's unconscious form drops out like a bag of wet sand. He is starting to recover by the time Noal gets to him. "I almost...I almost..." he whispers, then grabs Noal by the collar. "Get me to the Orbital Ring! That's where Evil is!" he screams.

Aki and Noal take him into space, and Blade then uses his full power blast against the section of the Orbital Ring where he knows Evil is sitting. Evil drifts away in space, damaged but not killed. "I'll be back, brother!" he laughs softly as he floats. Later, D-Boy is looking at the moon when Miri finds them, and they talk softly for a minute as he thanks her for breaking him out of his madness. Elsewhere in the base, Bartok is getting orders from Colbert to find out all he can about the Tekkaman system, at any cost...

15 Mashin Yomigareu
THE GIANT ROBOT/DEMON-GOD RETURNS TO LIFE

Staying in the Blade armor too long has driven D-Boy insane, and he proceeds to destroy anything and anyone in his way. (I suspect, considering that Tekkaman Evil obviously has no such limitation, that it is the fact Blade's change crystal is damaged that creates this problem.) Noal and Aki watch in agony as Blade runs amok through EDF forces. Freeman orders them to stay out of the way and keep track of the insane, incredibly powerful weapon.



brother and his two younger siblings; they turn and become Tekkamen. (The picture isn't too clear, but it looks like



D-Boy is having a nightmare as he sleeps, sweat staining the sheets on his bed. Finally he wakes up, and heads outside to look at the moon (this is getting to be a habit - I think his subconscious is trying to tell him that the key to the Tekkaman system is there, or something.) Freeman is heading into the bowels of the base, and the spy/correspondent is following him secretly. Bartok realizes there is a secret level far below the lowest

remember because he doesn't want to remember that he isn't human, but instead is some sort of Radamu construct made to look like a human? I can't follow all the dialog but this seems to be the gist.)

The alarm bells ring, and Bartok tells D-Boy to think over his words as the warrior runs off. Shortly the Blue Earth is taking off, and D-Boy looks like he's chewing on a lemon even sourer than usual. When he has to go turn into Blade, D-Boy finds himself reluctant to enter Pegas - it takes Aki's scolding to bring him back to the reality of the

gives the startled spy a computer disk. "Here's the information you want," the chief says. "Now - get out of here and go back to your master before I have you thrown out!" (I don't know yet if this is the truth, or just a red herring Freeman has come up with to get Colbert and company off D-Boy's case.) Blade has finished his mission and returns to the ship, which then heads back to base. Bartok, leaving the base in a jeep, sees the Blue Earth return. "Goodbye, I hope I never see you again, Space Knights!" he says as he drives off.



"public" level. Carefully he notes all the various defenses of this super-secret area, and then returns to his quarters to make plans.

Later he is showing some of the photos he has taken to Honden, Rebin and Miri - while subtly questioning them for more information on the Tekkaman system. Noal, Aki and D-Boy then walk in. They question D-Boy if he has remembered any more about his past. He looks pained and walks off, the correspondent on his heels. "If it's causing you pain, then you must be close to breaking through to those memories," he says. "Perhaps it's time you started really thinking about those questions as to who you are - or were - and where you come from," Bartok adds. Freeman meanwhile is checking Bartok's files with old friends back in the EDF. Bartok and D-Boy are still talking, and D-Boy doesn't like what the correspondent is saying. (I think Bartok is questioning if D-Boy is really human or not - perhaps he's afraid to

present, and he once more becomes Blade. Back at the base, Bartok is taking advantage of the distraction caused by the current mission to retrace Freeman's steps of the night before, using his considerable skill to bypass or thwart all the defenses guarding the secret level. Blade is out fighting the Radamu, and Aki is wondering if this is too easy - it looks like the Radamu were lured here, perhaps as some sort of bait? Bartok has gained entry to the secret level, and finds it filled with all sorts of Tekkaman prototypes. Then he is surprised by an armed Freeman. "I know you're an agent of Colbert," he says. "So you see - we've been working on the Tekkaman system for years. I suspect someone leaked information on the system to the Radamu, and they perfected it while we had to put a hold on our efforts during the first parts of the war. Now we're trying to play catch up, thanks to Colbert cutting the funds for this project..." He

These comments are on what I've seen of the series so far! Technically and storywise this series is much better than the original **TEKKAMAN THE SPACE KNIGHT** TV show. I find the character designs and even the mecha designs to be very well done. The mecha/armor looks efficient, without too many "just for jollies" additions. About the only character I tend to despise is Miri, but I have an allergy to all the generic "mascot" types of character. Admittedly, she shows more spunk and ability than a lot of the ilk, but she is still too cute for words and as such tends to make my stomach turn. I hope they let her develop into a real character instead of remaining only a cute, sometimes humorous mascot for the Space Knights. Certainly, if she's earned the position of communications officer, she can do more than giggle and make silly comments while handling the communications boards! (Then, the Japanese seem to find the role of "morale officer" far more

VOICE ARTISTS

D-Boy • Toshiyuki Morikawa

Noal • Yasunori Matsumoto

Aki • Megumi Hayashibara

Miri • Chisa Yokoyama

Freeman • Hiroataka Suzuoki

Honden • Shozo Iizuka

Rebin • Shigeru Nakahara

Evil • Taketo Koyasu

Dagger • Norio Tobita

STAFF

Author • Tatsunoko Planning Room

Story Co-ordinator • Mayori Sekijima & Satoru Akahori

Chara Design • TOIII & Hirotoishi Sano

Mecha Design • Yoshinori Sayama & Rei Nakahara

Animation Co-ordinator • Tomonori Kogawa

Production Director • Hideki Tonokatsu

Chief Director • Hiroshi Negishi

Music • Kaoru Wada

important than I do...)

Then there's the question of the overall quality of artwork and animation in the series as a whole, as opposed to character designs and publicity artwork. As many long-time anime fans are aware, nicely done character designs and pre-production artwork released to the anime magazines does not always reflect the amount of attention paid to the day-to-day artwork and animation done in the series (or OAV series or movie for that matter). Unfortunately, Tatsunoko again demonstrates that the studio has a tendency towards extreme unevenness in the quality of the artwork and animation of their TV shows, something many of its series have suffered since **GATCHAMAN FIGHTER** in the 1980's. (Fans of **TENKU SEN KI SHURATO** will remember the really BAD artwork and animation in some of the last episodes of the show, for example...) There are some places where the artwork makes me wince because it's so bad - perspective done wrong, foreshortening making the characters look awful, proportions all off... True, there are also lots of places where the artwork is quite nicely done, but it doesn't quite make up for the bad places. I'd rather have average artwork throughout the whole series rather than this unevenness. Animation so far has been fairly smooth if not terribly imaginative. The space battle scenes between Blade and his various foes are usually very well animated. The overtones of the triangle forming (or possibly a triad rather than triangle) between Aki, Noal, and D-Boy presents all sorts of intriguing possibilities, although I don't know how many of the Japanese fanzines will be willing to follow up on that idea. (For that matter, later episodes I haven't seen yet may scotch ideas in that direction, too! Stuff in the anime 'zines seem to indicate that we may eventually see a D-Boy / Aki pairing.) It's nice to see the Space Knights having a true adult as commander - at 35, Freeman is actually old enough to be believable in the position! Too many Japanese anime shows of late have had all the characters be in their teens, sometimes EARLY teens, with no real adults in the main cast much less in supervising roles! Even the main characters, aged between 18 and 20, are much older than the 13 to 14 year olds who populate a lot of the "hero" type shows. I think that this series may

well be aimed as much for the high school and college age audience rather than the younger set. There hasn't been a lot of toys and such released in conjunction with the show yet, which tends to support this assumption. Perhaps that's why the episodes to date have had some rather thought-provoking scenes as well as the hints of - *ahem* - unusual life styles and romantic relationships? The fact that D-Boy ends up stark naked after transforming out of the Tekkaman Blade "mode", while certainly a pleasant switch from the usual "ladies are naked during transformation sequences while males aren't" practice, is to my mind geared to attract the older female portion of the audience. (No, we haven't been treated to any full frontals - but Aki has certainly gotten an eyeful a time or two, and seems to be more intrigued by the experience than put off!) The characters in this series are very well drawn, and so far the writers have been able to not only develop believable personalities for their creations, but have had them consistently act IN character! This is much harder to do when you're developing complicated people for your show as opposed to using stereotypes. While there is a certain flavor of "hurt comfort" in many of the storylines, both the "hurt" and "comfort" portions gets shared around equally by all the major characters. Best yet the major characters have all gotten their chance to save the day - it isn't D-Boy turning into Blade to rescue the rest of the team all the time. Further, even with some of the sniping they make at each other occasionally, the Space Knights - and shortly D-Boy once he is accepted as a Space Knight - act like a team, and often only the fact they are using teamwork enables them to be successful in whatever mission they may be on during any particular episode. D-Boy may be Blade, but it takes the efforts of everyone to make sure he gets the chance to fight - and more than once Aki, Noal, and others end up rescuing HIS tail after he's exhausted his power and finds himself in tight spots of one sort or another! All the characters are shown to make mistakes, finding difficulty in admitting their errors, but usually in the end admitting to them. Noal starts out as an immature hotshot, but even in seven episodes he's starting to grow out of some of his less temperate

tendencies. Aki is happily competent, with a trace of complacency that she's being shaken out of. D-Boy starts out incredibly suspicious and paranoid for all that he's incredibly naive of human intrigue - yet for all that he is learning he can trust at least a few of his fellow humans. Rebin is an enigma - as I write this I still am not sure if he's male or female. Each time I watch the episodes I change my mind. (I'm still working on translating anime magazine articles but so far I haven't found any that really address the subject of Rebin's sex.) There is quite a bit of action and mecha/armor battles in the series, hopefully enough to placate those fans more interested in the technology than the storyline or characters. Some of the battle scenes have been very well done, both in animation and artwork. For me it's been a fairly nice blend, partly because a lot of character bits for both D-Boy, Noal, Aki, and his Tekkaman-armed enemies are revealed in the heat of battle. There is a small problem for those collecting the series - and that is that this is NOT an "episodic" series. Not only do the episodes not stand up well on their own, but the storyline continues in such a manner that if you miss an episode, the following one will lose you in places. In other words, each episode builds on the previous one and leads into the next one in such a way that it's vital to watch the series in order if you want to understand what's going on in the successive episodes. This means it can be very frustrating when you miss an episode; it also leads to all sorts of begging and whining in order to fill in any "holes" that may develop in the viewer's collection of **TEKKAMAN BLADE** eps. One good thing is that the show is already being released on laser disk and VHS tape, even before it's finished its run. That means that if you miss an episode or two you have a better chance of being able to get copies of it from pen friends or, if you have the money, buy the original prerecorded material. All in all, while **TEKKAMAN BLADE** isn't in the category of series like **GUNDAM**, it's quite good in its own right and worth collecting - in my opinion, anyway! I suppose someone looking for babes in battlesuits or lots of mecha battles will be disappointed in it, but if you're the type of viewer who enjoys character development and good storyline as well as action and fighting, give this show a chance!

Now that the Single European Market is (theoretically at any rate) upon us, I've been looking at some of the anime publications in the EEC's two major anime centres – France and Italy. In both countries there's a healthy comics scene and manga and anime are widely known. This widespread interest supports a number of fan and professional publications; here are a few of my own favourites. Of course, these are in their own native language, but worth getting even if you're not bilingual – read on and find out why.

• FRANCE •

Anime fandom in France is well established, largely thanks to the showing of a significant amount of anime on French tv over the last couple of decades. A number of companies produce anime on video, and translated manga are popular. Leader of the pack in French anime publishing is **ANIMELAND**, the journal of **I'ASSOCIATION ANIMARTE** and a thoroughly worthwhile publication. Its editor Cedric Littardi and his team of writers produce a consistently interesting magazine packed with features on both current and old shows, interviews, news and reviews. Their research is impeccable and their enthusiasm immense. When **ANIMELAND** drops through the letterbox I stop whatever I'm doing and read it from cover to cover, and I have no hesitation in recommending it as essential reading for anyone interested in anime. It is published quarterly by **I'ASSOCIATION ANIMARTE**, 15 rue de Phalsbourg, 750017 Paris, France and costs 25 francs (about £3) an issue.

TSUNAMI is a bimonthly magazine edited by Jean-Paul Jannequin and published by **DURENDAL**, 1 rue Eugene Varlin, 93170 Bagnolet, France, and costs 15 francs per issue at time of writing. With work from respected French fanwriters like Gwenael Jacquet (of SUMI JOOHOO), it has colour covers and lots of black and white artwork, mostly reprinted from Japanese manga and anime. The manga and tv news is especially interesting and the rest of the magazine is a nice mix of articles, reviews, interviews and comment. Coverage of European, US and Japanese developments gives

TSUNAMI a truly international "feel". Highly recommended. **MANGAZONE** is an anime and manga zine from **I'Association SAGA**, 68 rue Jaques Prevert, Bat G, Apt 141, 95320 St.-Leu-La-Forêt, France. Lots of information on the latest manga, articles on different genres like shojo (girls') manga and sports manga and anime, and individual artists like Ikeda Ryoko and Takemiya Keiko, a fanzine review page and penpal column. Elegant colour covers and crisp black and white interior art (a mix of manga panels and originals). It's edited by Yvan Marie, appears quarterly and costs 35 francs.



EUROPEAN ANIME

By Helen McCarthy

• ITALY •

Like the French, Italian anime fans have had anime on their tv screens for over twenty years and can buy manga, tapes and goodies on some shows with relative ease. It's no surprise therefore that the anime press is well established.

Leader of the pack is **GRANATA PRESS** with a huge range of titles. **ZERO MAGAZINE** reprints manga, including **KEN IL GUERRIERO** (Hokuto no Ken, aka **FIST OF THE NORTH STAR**), **Z COMIX** has **CRYING FREEMAN**, **2001 NIGHTS**, **BLACK MAGIC & DOMINION**, **MANGA HERO** has **GREY** and **HOROBI**, **MANGA CLASSIC** has **MAZINGA Z**, **MANGA COMPACT & MANGA VIDEO** have **DEVILMAN** and **I CAVALLIERI DELLO ZODIACO** (Saint Seiya).

They also have a range of illustration

books in full colour, including **MS GUNDAM: ILLUSTRATION WORLD** at 45,000 lire (about £20) and **FIGHT! ICZER-ONE PERFECT COLLECTION** at 35,000 lire. These are the original Japanese books, full of wonderful pictures, but with the text translated into English! They can now be obtained in the UK through **TITAN DISTRIBUTORS** (try your local comic shop or branch of **FORBIDDEN PLANET**).

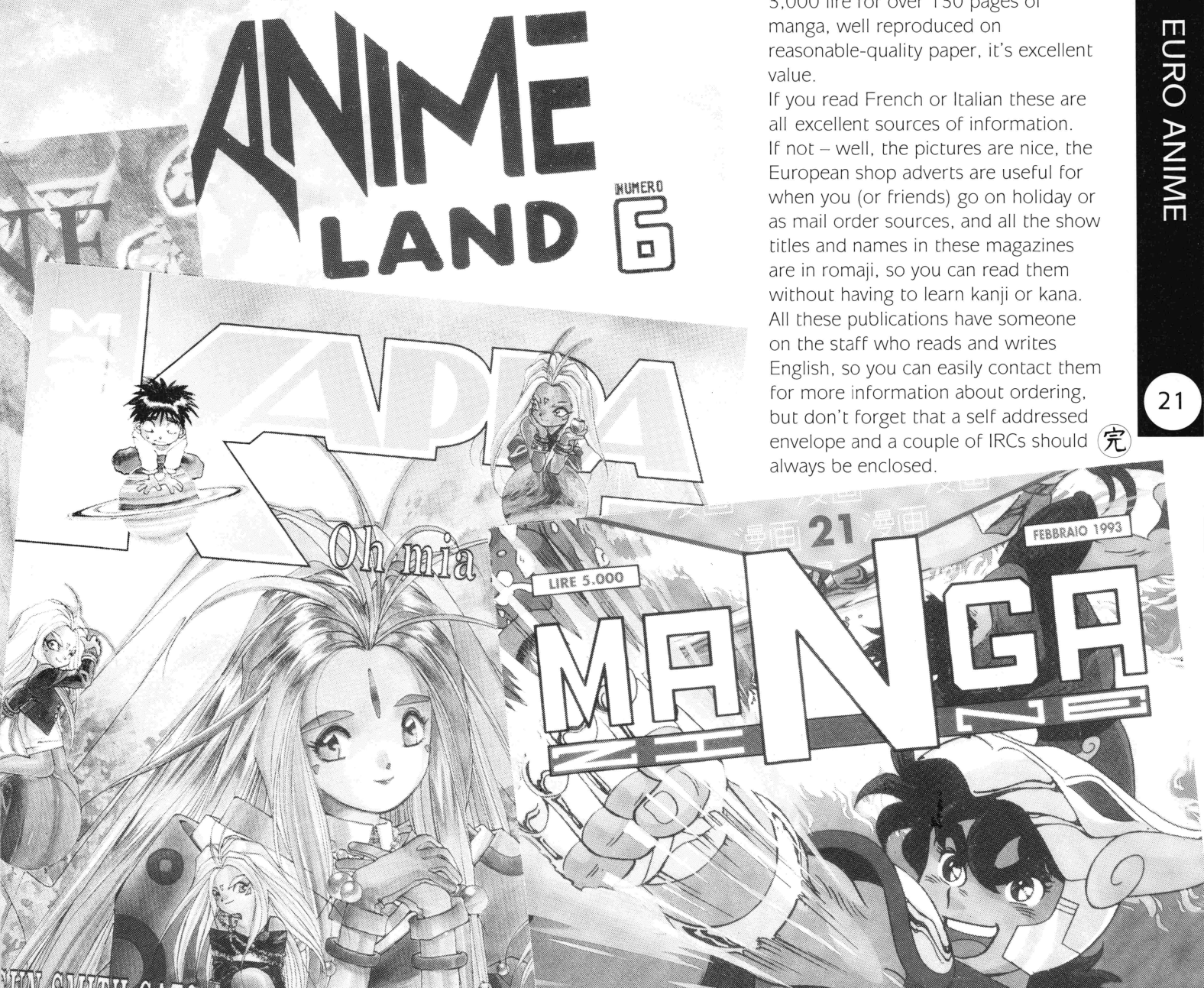
Their flagship publication is **MANGAZINE**, monthly at 5000 lire (about £2.25), which carries excellent anime articles, including a very nice full colour section packed with pictures, and manga in black and white – currently **MAI**, **RANMA 1/2**, **LUM** (Urusei Yatsura) and **PATLABOR**. Well designed and packed with information and pictures, it's a must for the serious anime fan. For more details contact **GRANATA PRESS**, via Marconi no.

47, 40122 Bologna, Italy.

Another Italian publication worth having is **KAPPA MAGAZINE**, (monthly, 4,500 lire) from **STAR COMICS**, who also publish manga including **ORANGE ROAD** and American reprints, available from **ALESSANDRO DISTRIBUZIONE**, via del Borgo 140 abc, 40126 Bologna, Italy. In the same perfect-bound format as **MANGAZINE**, it also carries manga (currently **3x3 EYES**, **OH MY GODDESS!** and **COMPILER**), articles and news, with a nice mix of colour and black and white sections. It would be very hard to choose between these two magazines – both are excellently researched and well presented – but luckily the price is reasonable enough to warrant ordering both.

STAR COMICS also produce a wide range of translated American comics, but of primary interest to anime and manga fans is their monthly paperback translation of Izumi Matsumoto's **KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD**. At 3,000 lire for over 130 pages of manga, well reproduced on reasonable-quality paper, it's excellent value.

If you read French or Italian these are all excellent sources of information. If not – well, the pictures are nice, the European shop adverts are useful for when you (or friends) go on holiday or as mail order sources, and all the show titles and names in these magazines are in romaji, so you can read them without having to learn kanji or kana. All these publications have someone on the staff who reads and writes English, so you can easily contact them for more information about ordering, but don't forget that a self addressed envelope and a couple of IRCs should always be enclosed. 完

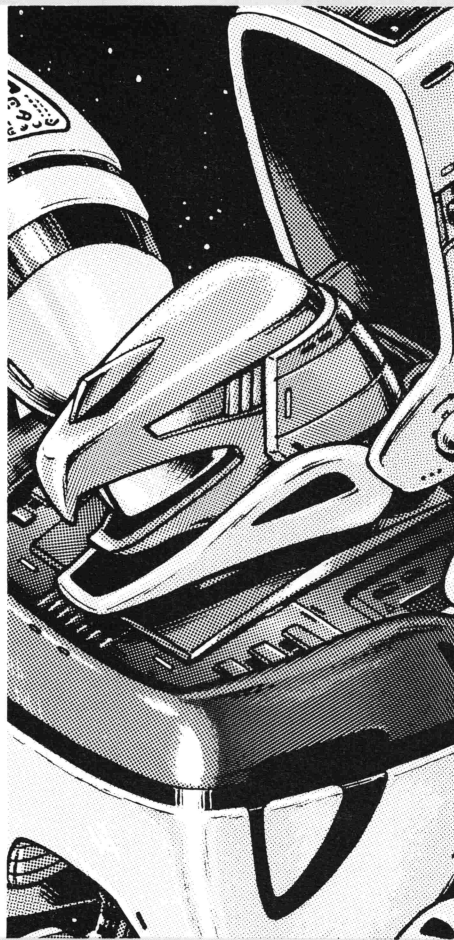


Please allow me to introduce you to one of the finest series to come from the boom years of the early eighties: Super Dimensional Century Orguss. An intriguing plot, a fascinating scientific premise, packed with action and with an interesting cast of characters; what more could you ask for? First broadcast from 3rd July 1983 to 8th April 1984 on Sunday afternoons at two o'clock (peak time), it replaced Macross, which had finished the previous week, and lasted for 35 episodes of 25 minutes each. The series has maintained a steady following ever since, although it was never as successful as Macross or Gundam because of the offbeat storyline and the virtual impossibility of any sequels – the series being almost completely self-contained. Interestingly, Sunday is the only day of the week a Japanese salaryman normally spends with his family – it seems likely that this series was aimed at a wider audience than the average robot show.

Set in the year 2062, the story opens with a battle for control of a space elevator nicknamed the 'Beanstalk'. Designed to lift payloads into orbit without the use of rockets or shuttles, the elevator is a miles high tower, situated on the equator to avoid coriolis forces. This idea was originally conceived by Arthur C Clarke (the father of the communications satellite) in his novel 'The Fountains of Paradise', just one example of a strong SF feel to the series. Two rival powers have co-operated in its construction – and then disagreed over who should control it. The war is fought with Atomic weapons, Bacterial weapons, Chemical weapons and Dimensional weapons. Which is where the story opens as Kei Katsuragi, a fighter pilot, is assigned to protect a group of technicians about to detonate a dimensional bomb (codenamed the 'chocolate parfait monster'!) at the base of the tower and hurl it into another dimension without destroying it. What they intended to do with it afterwards is never made clear...The bomb is armed but Kei's fighter is damaged before he can escape and he attempts to abort the count-down – unsuccessfully. Kei, along with fellow pilot and best friend Olsen Bern, are hurled forward in time by the resulting explosion: Kei twenty years ahead but Olsen only fifteen. Arriving in the future through a warp 'gate', Kei crashes his Bronco II fighter and is

rescued by a factory ship of the Emaan, a race of mainly girls; mainly beautiful.

The Emaan live a gypsy life style, travelling around in their floating factory; buying, selling, fixing things and generally trying to avoid being killed by another race, the Terram. Most of their males have already died and Kei is quite happy being surrounded by girls, so he helps them fight off an attack by the Terram. He is almost shot down at one point, but the Terram pilot recognises him as the 'tokuiten' – or unique point, a manifestation of the dimensional disturbance. His hesitation gives Kei the chance he needs. After the battle,

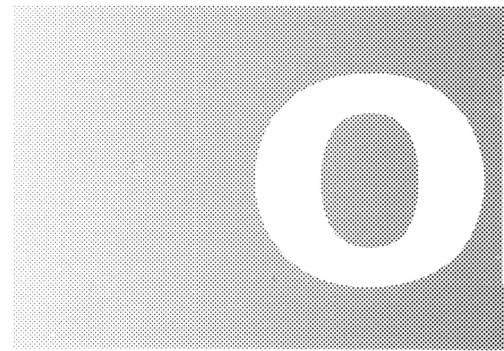


Kei lands – then finds out his hosts are aliens, with two prehensile tendrils growing from the back of the neck! But what the heck, they're pretty anyway, so he stays.

As the story develops, it becomes apparent that the dimensional bomb was a massive success – sort of. It has fractured the time-space continuum and caused several alternate earths to co-exist in the same 'time'. The Emaan are really human beings from a parallel world, as are the Terram, who come from Kei's own time line (the names being distortions of human and terran). However, the Terram have developed into a military dictatorship,

so Kei finds his sympathies lying more with the Emaan than his own people. This is complicated by the fact that his best friend, Olsen, is an officer in the Terram forces, having arrived five years earlier. To make things interesting, Kei also has a daughter named Athena whom he has never seen (she was born after he disappeared) who is now nineteen years old, in the Terram military, and who hates her father for abandoning her mother in the first place.

The story follows Kei's progress through this strange new world as he attempts to come to terms with the loss of his past and his responsibilities for the future. As one of the two 'tokuitens', along with Olsen, he finds himself a focus of attention by various factions who all want to use him for their own ends. Unfortunately the dimensional barrier around the earth has become unstable and will eventually cause the Earth to overheat, burning all life to a crisp. The only way



to prevent this is for Kei and Olsen to somehow 'repair' it and return the earth to its original state. The Muu, a machine culture, want to prevent this and destroy all biological life on the planet. The Terram don't want to destroy it – just alter it so that their reality is the only one that survives. And so, out of self preservation, do one political faction of the Emaan. The problem for Kei is that any repair attempt will probably end in his death. Against this larger backdrop is played out the personal drama of love, friendship and obligation. Kei becomes romantically involved with Mimsi, but has to face the fact that his duty means they will have to part forever. He has to come to terms with a daughter the same age, who hates him. Olsen and Athena also have their own relationship to play out, and Kei's friendship with Olsen is tested to the limit. Eventually he has to face his responsibilities and make his own choices about the future.

Along the way there are many intriguing plot twists and the story develops and grows rather than becoming one long chase. The only drawback is the aerial battles, which do become rather monotonous and repetitive, but the interplay between the characters is handled very well and is an essential counterbalance. They are believable people, and their characters change as the story progresses. The animation, too, is extremely good. The backgrounds are well painted – some of the jungle scenes, in particular, are very detailed; something seldom seen in television animation. Mikimoto character design is always an asset to any production and the series has a good feel for movement. It even has catchy opening and closing songs!

The series is a powerful statement that you can go home again, that no matter what trials and disasters befall you, eventually things will return to the way they were, and the status quo will



SUPER DIMENSION CENTURY

ORGUSS

remain the status quo. Bearing in mind the history and culture of Japan, this is an immensely reassuring theme. As a counterpoint, the two sides to technology, fear of (the Muu) and love for (the Orguss), are well represented. Superficially this was a mecha-based show, utilising the concepts pioneered over the previous four years by other series such as Mobile Suit Gundam, Aura Battler Dunbine and Super Dimensional Fortress Macross. The founder of Studio Nue, Haruka Takachiho, was also the creator of Crusher Joe and those dynamite gals, the Lovely Angels. In particular it owes a lot to Macross, Studio Nue, including Kenichi Matsuzaki, were mainly responsible for the script of Macross as well, and Artland's Noboru Ishiguro also worked as Director. The mecha designs are similar – essentially being aircraft capable of transforming into a humanoid mode for close quarter battle. The Orguss of the title even looks like a slightly more organic

form of the Valkyrie fighters from Macross. They also share the same character designer, Haruhiko Mikimoto, and the characters easily look as if they could have wandered across from the SDF1. At one point Kei has a flashback to some of his old girl friends – these include Lynn Minmay and Sammi from Macross! The voice actor for Kei also played Max in Macross. However, apart from the overall look of the series, they have no story elements in common and Orguss is not a sequel. When it finished, it was replaced by the third Super Dimension series, Super Dimensional Cavalry Southern Cross, produced by Tatsunoko. This had nothing at all to do with the previous two series and was not a success, folding after only 23 episodes. Mikimoto and Kawamori went on to produce the extremely successful OAV, Megazone Two Three. Orguss is currently being released in a dubbed version by US Renditions/LA Hero. Unfortunately, the voice acting

Produced by Tokyo Movie Shinsha Co. Ltd.

Executive Producer Yutaka Fujilka

Producer Toshitsugu Mukaisubo

Original Story by Studio Nue

Screenplay Kenichi Matsuzaki

Music Kentaro Haneda

Character Design Haruhiko Mikimoto

Mecha design Yasushi Ishizu &

Masahiro Chiba

Art Director Yoshiyuki Yamamoto

Chief Directors Noboru Ishiguro &

Yasuyoshi Mikamoto

Animation Directors Haruhiko

Mikimoto & Aki Mishimori

on the first volume was pretty awful – hopefully this will improve. The actual script seems faithful to the original, however, apart from one jarring element. Tokuiten has been translated as “differentiated idioblast”!

Kei Katsuragi

Nineteen year old pilot; brave, loyal, reckless, irresponsible, lucky. Always

By John Spencer

ready to go off in the Orguss and fight something (at least once every episode!), he is torn between his love for Mimsi, his lust for any girl he meets, and his duty to help repair the dimensional breach and save the earth from burning up. As the one of the two ‘Tokuitens’, the Terram want to use him to reshape reality for their own ends. The Emaan also want to use him; the Muu just want to kill him.

Athena Henderson

Kei's nineteen year old daughter, though she doesn't know it at first. She hates him for, as she sees it, running off and leaving her mother before she was born. Kei's lecherous behaviour doesn't do much to change this opinion. As a crack Terram pilot, at least the equal of Kei and Olsen, she has full opportunity to try and revenge herself on him. She is also in love with Olsen, but he is too involved with his duty to return her affection.



Olsen Bern

Terram pilot and Kei's best friend. He arrived in the future five years earlier than Kei and is consequently more mature and responsible than Kei. Since his duty includes probably dying, together with Kei, in an attempt to repair the fabric of the space-time continuum, they now have an argumentative relationship. He is an excellent pilot and superior in physical combat to Kei due to his extra years' training. He is fond of Athena but will let nothing stand in the way of his obligations.

Mimsi Larz

Teenage Emaan girl, she will cease to be able to have children after the age of eighteen. Extremely brave if a little headstrong, she is a competent pilot. At a turning point in her life, her emotions are in turmoil and is consequently torn between Kei, who she initially dislikes, and Sray, her fiance, who is rather boring.

Riigu

One of the few surviving males on board the Emaan ship, he is the chief engineer responsible for rebuilding Kei's damaged Bronco II fighter – combining it with advanced Emaan technology to create the transformable fighter of the title, Orguss (named after Jabby's god of war).

Mohm

Disturbingly female shaped robot bought by Kei. Scatterbrained, enthusiastic and eager to please, she can't understand why she isn't human. Determined to be Kei's servant, she finds herself increasingly jealous of Mimsi. She was originally built by the Muu civilisation as a sort of slave underclass. After all, no self-respecting robot would want to look like a human, would they?

Jabby

A roughly human-sized intelligent dinosaur, he is an isolated refugee from his own parallel earth. At the time, he was being chased by his wife, who had caught him with a young female dinosaur. Leaping into the sea to escape, he was caught in a warp 'gate' and deposited on the Emaan world. He has the ability to detect the imminent appearance of one of these gates, which occur at random due to the instability of the dimensional field around the earth.

Shaia

Leader of the Emaan factory ship, the Gromma, she is a mature, intelligent woman, constantly exasperated by the irresponsible behaviour of the other

members of the crew. She leads the life of a technological gypsy due to political disagreements with her sister, also the fact that they both loved the same man – as the elder sister, she felt responsible and left, out of consideration for Maniisha.

Maniisha

Shaia's sister, and leader of a rival political group in the Emaan city, she initially resents Shaia for being the older sister, but eventually they become reconciled.

Sray

Mimsi's fiancee, he loves her very much though Mimsi is reluctant to commit herself because he's a bit of a drip. Though wanting to be noble and brave, he doesn't really possess the skill to back it up.

Maii & Ria

Back up pilots for Kei, they are sisters, forced by circumstances to become fighter pilots and acquitting themselves well.

Tai

Muu battle robot – for some reason his circuits are defective and he has decided to side with the Emaan.

Roberto

Terram captain commanding the air force in the area when Kei first arrived.

Henry

Terram officer put in charge of the hunt for Kei.

Tina

Kei's girlfriend – he was with her the night before the mission that led to the detonation of the D-bomb. Her father chased him away waving a shotgun. Athena was born later, unknown to Kei, and she always remained loyal to him in spite of everything.

Poputei

Mother of two Emaan children, her husband was killed by the Terram. Trying to bring up children at the same time as her other duties, she is a constant reminder to the others of the problems of starting a family during a war.

Goovu

Ancient Emaan crew member – does a fire-breathing act with Jabby to drum up business when they hold markets.

1 – The Destruction of Space and Time

Kei arrives in the future and meets the Emaan, helping them in their battle with the Terram before finally realising that they are aliens.

2 – Lonely Wolf

Kei realises the Emaan are 'human' –

and makes advances to Mimsi which are rebuffed. His attempt to return to his own time by flying through a warp gate fails and his fighter crashes. He is now trapped here.

3 – Pretty Machine

Kei finds that life surrounded by alien girls can't be all bad, and his fighter is recovered for rebuilding. The Terram and Emaan both display an interest in the 'Tokuiten', and Mimsi buys Kei a humanoid robot, Mohm, to be his 'servant'.

4 – Caravan

The Emaan hold a market. Kei is having difficulty accepting Mohm's attitude towards her 'master', and the Terram are still trying to capture him.

5 – Lovers

The newly constructed 'Orguss' is stolen by two villagers who want to rescue a girlfriend from a Terram prison. Kei gallantly decides to help; and is miffed when the girl runs off with her boyfriend after being rescued.

6 – Vanishing Point

Stopping to gather food in a remote valley, Jabby tells Kei the story of his own arrival in this time. The ship is nearly trapped when a warp gate opens above them and they are attacked by Terram fighters, but they manage to escape. Mimsi is becoming rather fond of Kei...

7 – I Love You

Sray and Mimsi argue about her feelings for Kei – he is becoming jealous and wants to get married but Mimsi keeps putting him off. The Terram attack the ship near Gibraltar, but are eventually beaten off.

8 – Runaway

The Emaan home city has political problems and are unable to help the ship. Kei and Shaia have a bath, which upsets Kei. Kei tries to chat up Mimsi again, which upsets Sray. And there's another battle.

9 – Revolution

Heavy handed pastiche of the French Revolution as, crossing France, the ship helps overthrow a corrupt regime they had previously leased a powerful weapon to. Scavenging a battlefield, they also recover and repair a Muu battle robot – Tai.

10 – Barbarians

Sray is beginning to feel that he is losing Mimsi to Kei. Attempting to defend her, he is wounded during an attack on the ship by primitive barbarians who are, initially, unexpectedly successful.

11 – Dummy

The Emaan attempt to deceive the

Terram into believing Kei has been shot down and killed. Unfortunately, they discover the ruse when Kei has to rescue Mimsi from vampire bats.

12 – Terram Girl

A new Terram pilot – Athena Henderson, in the latest Naikikku mech – attempts to locate Kei by detecting the Tokuiten jamming field. She is successful, but is shot down because she has orders not to kill him. Shaia explains to the crew that Kei is the key to repairing the world.

13 – Crispy Crater

Sray volunteers to run a decoy mission to enable the ship to safely cross Afghanistan. Mimsi is very upset, but he is determined to be a martyr and is duly shot down.

14 – Operation ‘D’

The Muu, a ruthless machine culture, attack a Terram city. The Terram have decided to kill Kei as they think they can repair the world with their own ‘D’ system. Olsen is forced to save his life and deserts the Terram. The ship finally arrives at the Emaan city.

15 – Tokuiten

Kei picks up a message from Olsen on his old radio frequency; they meet and Olsen explains what has happened since they both disappeared. Later, in the Emaan city, technicians tell Kei more about the fragmentation of the world.

16 – My Factory

Two Emaan factions disagree over what to do with Kei. The Toobuke, led by Shaia’s sister Maniisha, attempts to brainwash Kei into helping them. Feeling this to be immoral, Shaia rescues Kei and the factory ship escapes from the Emaan city.

17 – Seventeen

Mimsi is sick, as she is approaching the age when she will be unable to have children, and this causes much discussion. The ship is being pursued by Toobuke vessels – Sray reappears and helps save it at the cost of his own life. Raasuke ships from the opposing faction arrive to help.

18 – Sisters

Shaia and the Raasuke captain decide to try and get Olsen, the other Tokuiten, head for the space elevator in South America and attempt to repair the dimensional field. Meanwhile, Athena is keeping Olsen supplied in his life as an outlaw.

19 – Time Slip

During a battle, Kei and Athena are caught in a warp gate and sent back to prehistoric times, where Kei saves her life before they are shifted to World

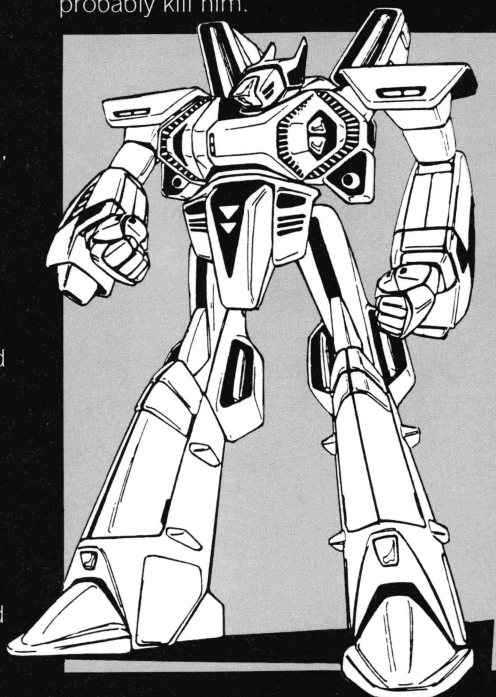
War II. Kei is struck by her resemblance to Tina. They return through another gate.

20 – Broken Through

Kei and Olsen meet on the factory ship. Olsen wants him to join the Terram, but Kei doesn’t trust them and they get into a fight. Mimsi finally admits her feelings for Kei when she sees him beaten up. Later Olsen tells Kei that Athena is his daughter. And the ship is attacked by both the Toobuke and the Terram.

21 – Father

Kei, Olsen, Athena and Mimsi all meet and find out the truth about their relationships. Kei is not pleased to find out that repairing the world will probably kill him.



22 – Decide

Kei and Olsen decide to stay with the Emaan as this will give the best chance of survival to all the various worlds, not just one. Maniisha decides to help them escape the Terram.

23 – Destroyer

The Terram and the Emaan are conducting experiments with dimensional technology. Both systems are detected by the Muu and attacked by raiding parties.

24 – Muu

With the Emaan time-space device destroyed, Maniisha turns over control of the Emaan to Shaia.

25 – Terram Soldier

The Terram attack the combined Emaan forces and Robert is killed.

26 – Broken Down

The Muu finally break through, and Athena is forced to destroy the Terram D-system to prevent it falling into their hands. The Terram now realise they need Kei and Olsen alive.

27 – Message

The Terram fleet discovers the Emaan and propose participation in their dimensional project. The Emaan realise they can’t continue without Terram resources.

28 – Come Back Lover

They agree on a combined effort to put things right; to do this they must reach the space elevator – the only object to pierce the dimensional barrier. Mimsi has to leave to visit her sick mother.

29 – Choice

Kei returns to the Emaan city to rescue Mimsi from a Muu attack. Olsen tries to stop him as his first duty is to reach the space elevator. The Muu also attack the factory ship and the Terram research base.

30 – Outsider

Disillusioned, Tai and Mohm visit their machine counterparts in the Muu city but are dismayed by the Muu plan to destroy all biological life on the planet. Disrupting them, they then return to Emaan.

31 – Children

Mimsi is found to be pregnant which causes great celebration. Kei, Olsen and Athena are caught in another warp gate but eventually return.

32 – Lost World

Jabby discovers the remains of one of his cities, destroyed by the disturbance after the dimensional barrier was distorted by impact from an object in orbit. Kei is depressed at the thought of dying. And the Muu are still in hot pursuit of the factory ship.

33 – Last Charge

Henry is killed in an attempt at revenge for the death of Roberto. Riigu discovers that the Terram are planning a double cross by altering the time-space capsule.

34 – Battlefield

The Terram and Emaan fleets advance on the Muu controlled space elevator. If they succeed, the worlds will be separated again – if not, they will all die. Mohm dies saving Mimsi from a Muu attack.

35 – Space and Time Reforged

They fight their way to the top of the tower. Olsen finally admits his feelings for Athena – he gives her his sunglasses. Athena finally accepts Kei as her father. Kei says farewell to Mimsi. They launch the capsule into the dimensional field at the same moment it is struck by an orbiting satellite; in the ensuing disturbance they find themselves returned to the moment the field was created.

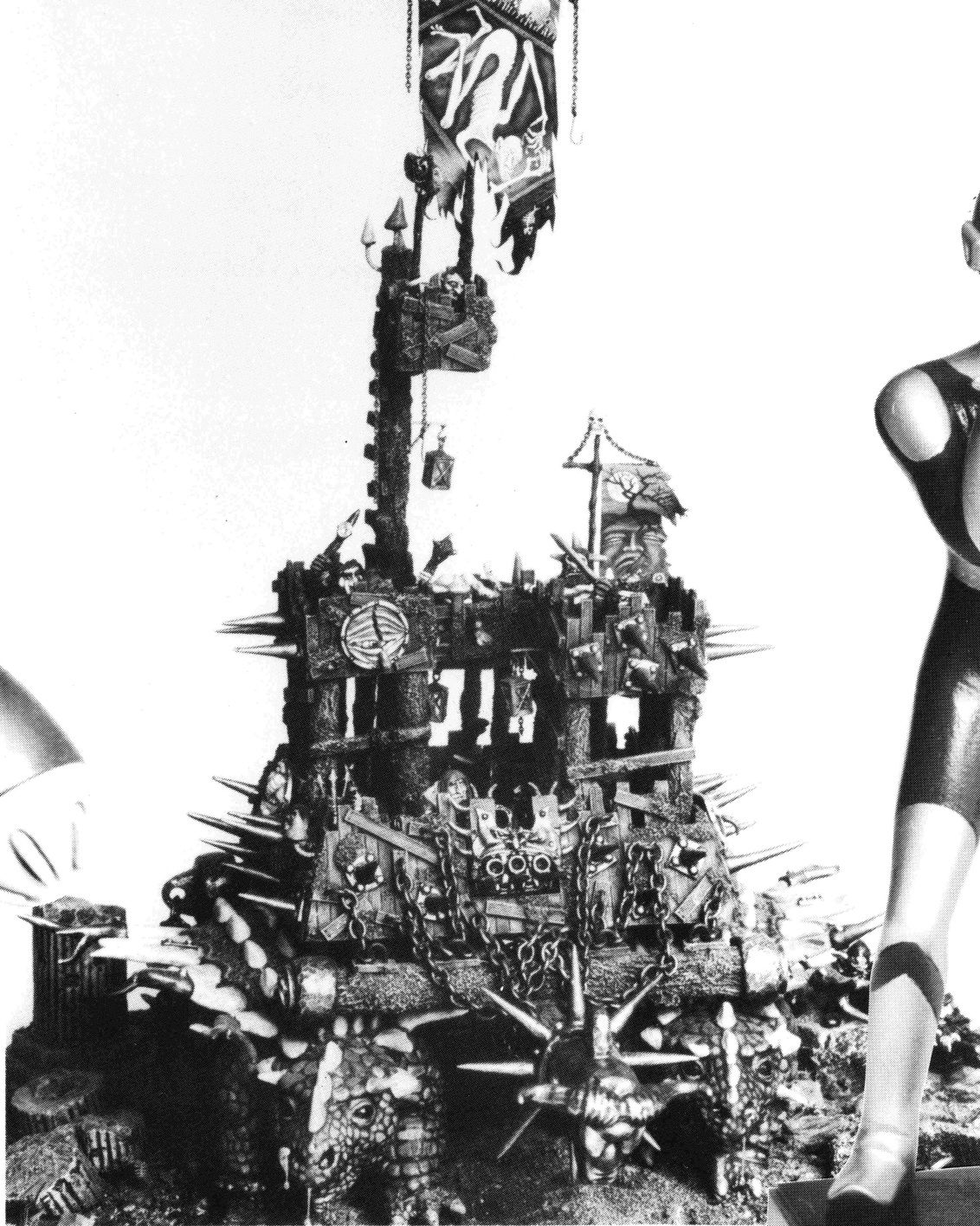


MODEL CLUB 英国



MODEL CLUB

26



Fraser Gray's MODELLERS WORLD

A look into the world of one of the UK's most popular RPG miniaturists and his ventures into anime.

Fraser Gray rates himself modestly as a "beginner" in the anime model world, but he is well known among gamers for his many award winning miniatures, painted in superb detail with many touches of humour among the macabre and bloody paraphernalia beloved of RPG'ers.

He came relatively late to modelling, unlike many fans who start out in SF and fantasy modelling in their early teens, but his enthusiasm has resulted in a considerable output over the last decade. His interest in anime has developed over recent years and he has begun to apply his skills to larger items, both in anime and science fiction. His work can speak for itself, as these pictures demonstrate, so further text is a waste of space!

Anyone wishing to contact Fraser can write to him, enclosing an sase,
c/o **ANIME UK MAGAZINE.**

DANNY TAFFLER saves the novice anime fan's dilemma...

"Yes! Finally! A British Anime magazine," I said, "I have to show my appreciation by writing something for them."

"There's just one small problem," said Dennis, nibbling a Wotsit, "what you know about Anime wouldn't cover my left nostril."

"Hmm..." I said, "good point. Let me think a minute."

(Several hours and a packet of Wotsits later...)

"I've got it! I'll write a plot, make it into Anime, then write about it!" I yelled.

Dennis gazed listfully into his empty packet of Wotsits.

(Several hours, quite a few beers, and an exceedingly bad hangover later...)

"I've got it! I'll go to Japan, ingratiate myself into the confidence of Otomo Katsuhiko, then write a psychological profile of his dog," I suggested. Dennis opened a packet of Frisps without gusto.

(Several days, a course in Japanese, and the discovery that he in fact owns a goldfish later...)

"Okay! THIS time I've REALLY got it! I'll write about what I don't know about!" I stated. Dennis feigned enthusiasm.

"Oh really? Let me guess, it'll either be a critique of Anime and its reflection on Japan as a whole, or about the Anime that they show French kids on Wednesdays."

"Oh bugger," I said, "I was going to write a guide on how to get along at Anime Cons without actually knowing anything about Anime."

"Well then," said Dennis, smugly relaxing into the chair with the last packet of Skips, "that'll have to do..."

HOW TO GET ALONG AT AN ANIME CON WITHOUT KNOWING ANYTHING.

By Danny Taffler (who genuinely doesn't know anything except Dennis's packet of crisps, and even then they're not on first name terms.)

Right, so you've finally shelled out the cash for a con, but you don't really know much about Anime. How do you create a good impression, without using a pocket translator, without knowing anything about Anime? Have no fear! Here is the concise guide to pretending that you know who Kia Asimiya is, and what he meant when he said " *&£@*\$!¤ ! This involves using a series of subtle ploys to appear to know what you don't. Sound good? Read on.

The "I know sooooo much more about Anime than you that I wouldn't lower myself by talking to you" ploy.

Practise sneering in a mirror and giving yourself withering stares. Buy every piece of hyped Anime merchandise you can lay your hands on, then wear it. I realise that you'll look exceedingly stupid with an Akira lampshade on your head, but believe me, it all adds to the effect. Stand in the centre of the room and ignore everyone going past you. Should someone look at you, give them an extra special "incredibly raised nostril" sneer. Should anyone actually engage you in conversation, fix them with a more withering stare than if Kylie had asked you if you were a fan of hers. Soon people will be whispering in corners about how you're probably the best friend of Masamure Shirow, or how you're writing a new Anime epic called "A psychological profile of Otomo Katsuhiko's goldfish." In no time people will be offering you free lunches, asking for your autograph, or wanting you to vomit over their T-shirt so it becomes a collector's item. Just make sure you don't ever say more than "Hmm..." and you'll be OK.

The "Recirculation of information" ploy. This one is a must for beginners. Strike up a brief conversation with someone, ask them if they knew that Project A-KO was inspired by Kermit the Frog, purloin as much information off them as possible without actually saying anything yourself, then move onto someone else. Strike up a conversation with them, and offload your pieces of purloined information onto them. Meanwhile try and get as much information out of them as possible, then move onto someone else. Strike

up a conversation with them, and offload your purloined pieces of information onto them.... and so on. However, should someone strike up a conversation with you, then ask you if you knew that Project A-KO was inspired by Kermit the Frog, give them as much mis-information as possible. Make them go away thinking that Rumiko Takahashi is Elvis*, that Akira wasn't actually that good (BLASPHEMY!!!), and then have a good laugh about it later...

The "I'm Japanese and I don't speak any English" ploy.

I'm afraid this only works if you really ARE Japanese, but that never stopped me before. So, if you're not Japanese, practice lengthening your eyes, going around in suits, being short, and carrying too many cameras for any practical use. When, as inevitably happens, some obviously Animeish person engages you in conversation, say "Ah so sorry, no speak English" If this person then bursts into fluent Japanese, then you really are in the shit. At this point desperate measures are called for ie. subterfuge and deception, learn the following phrases in Japanese:

1. "The Gross National Product of Nepal is determined by fluctuations in the yak to goat's cheese exchange rate."
2. "I am sorry, but I will not whip your buttocks with a small pig's digestive tract."
3. "According to my bank manager, it would be most advantageous to split

*Understandably a bit difficult unless Elvis has er....ahem 'changed' a bit.

How to fool Anime fans

By

the payments over 7 months.”
 In the face of these phrases even the most stoic person will be gobsmacked into inactivity, allowing you to escape unnoticed. Alternatively, you could pretend to be Outer Mongolian... The “humble, but exceedingly rich” ploy.

WARNING!!! REQUIRES COPIOUS QUANTITIES OF CASH!! OK. For this little charade you’ll have to save up a bit. Pretend to be a humble, innocent initiate into Anime. Always be very quiet and polite. Always appear willing to listen to absolute garbage provided it’s about Anime. Always offer to buy people lunch (provided they don’t talk absolute garbage about Anime like “Kermit the Frog inspired Project A-KO”. EVERYONE knows it was Miss Piggy.) Soon your facade of innocence will pay off as you get introduced to the right people as a nice guy/girl. Your wallet will have more perforations than a tea bag, but who cares when you can buy lunch for Mr Miyazaki (who the hell is he?). It does, however, pay off as you can get things signed, sell tape recordings of your lunches and then make lots a cash! Even better, become privy to their most intimate secrets and then blackmail them so that the world will never know that Buichi Terasawa wears green underwear (NYAH! NYAH! NYAH!).

The “I’m one of the three women outside Japan to actually LIKE Anime” ploy.

Sorry, guys, this isn’t one for you. Well girls, let’s face it, Anime is not popular among women in general. I know this for a fact: of the three, one is Helen McCarthy, one is my cat Rosy and the other refused to be identified. As a result of your extreme scarcity, the value of the female Animeist went through the roof in the late 80s. You can have any guy out there that you want (provided you’re, ahem...inclined that way), can get any goods at massive discounts, and can get the autograph of anyone famous (who is missing getting buried in Japanese female fans). Not bad, eh?

THE END

“There,” said Dennis, deciding he preferred peanuts, “that wasn’t too hard.”

“You’re right (for once), I just hope it was what they wanted.” I said, munching a kumquat.



EDITORIAL COMMENT: Danny’s made just one mistake. Unfortunately it’s the one mistake he couldn’t afford to make, and nor can you if you REALLY want to look cool, contemptuous and In the Know. The ultrahip don’t wear logos. Of any kind. EVER. They wear unadorned matt black and shades. The only logos they’d even be caught dead wearing are for very obscure 20-year-old anime shows or videos with minute circulations (say, three copies plus the director’s mum). If asked what the logos are for they will spout a string of flawless Japanese syllables and, when you look uncomprehending, will raise a weary eyebrow and say “oh, you’ve never heard of it, then? Well, it was never a mass-market thing, or course...”

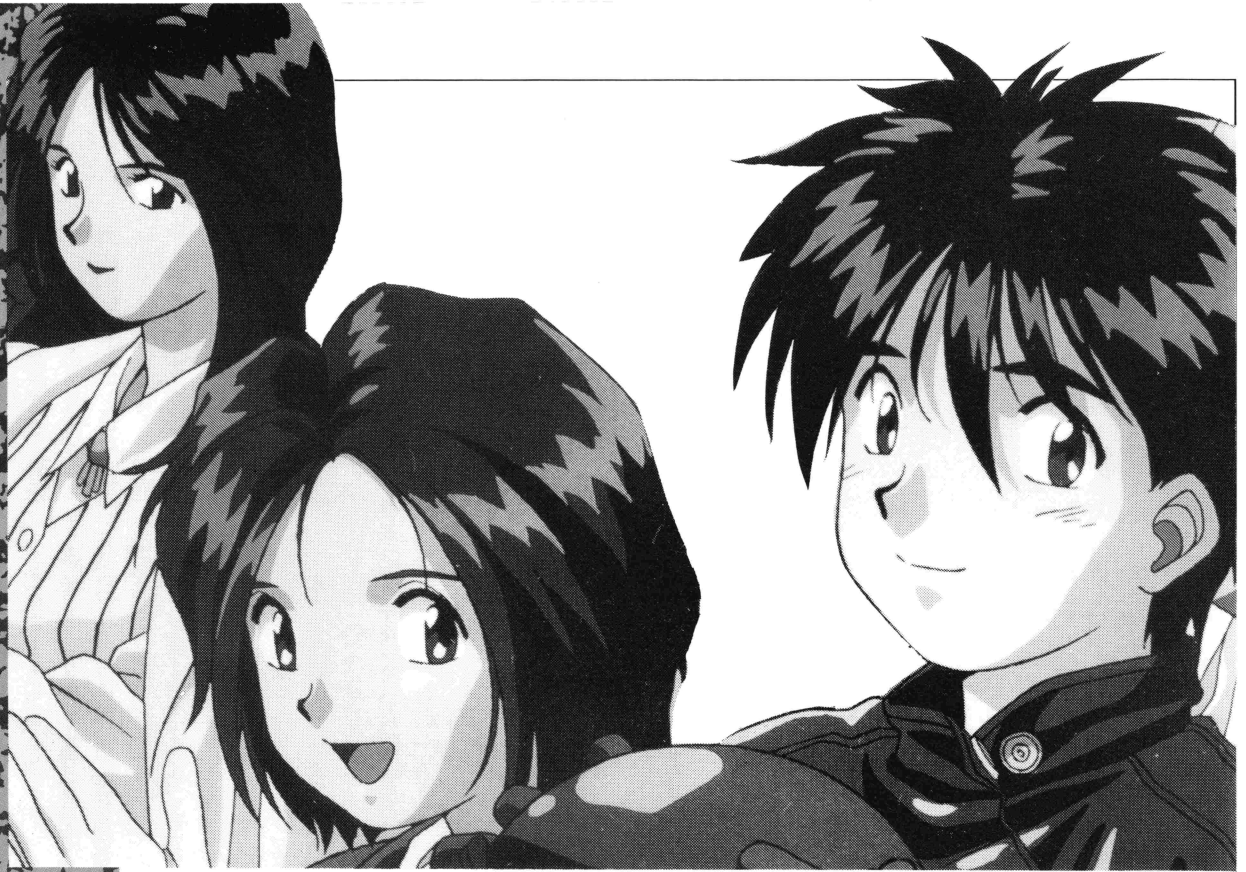
If by any faint chance you have heard of it before, they raise a weary eyebrow and say, “of course it’s a bit common these days but kitsch always has a certain charm...” They only like anime no-one else has heard of it yet, and lose interest as soon as they meet anyone else who’s seen it. (Cynics would say this is because it might blow their cover...)

In fact, come to think of it, except that they wouldn’t be seen dead wearing a logo for anything popular, they’ve probably already read this guide...



ol an
 an!

Danny Taffler



Ah! My Goddess

Vol 1 • Moonlight and Cherry Blossoms
by Peter Evans

The telephone rings. The place is the Nekomi Institute of Technology student residence and there is only one person in. After taking a message he decides to order some ramen. After several wrong numbers, closed shops and the like he gets:

"Hai. This is the helping goddess office."

He apologizes and is about to hang up when the person on the other end of the line hangs up on him. The next thing he hears is a woman's voice from behind him. He is thoroughly surprised, and who wouldn't be if a woman stepped out of their mirror!

"Morisato Keiichi-san, I am the goddess Belldandy'."

She is a serious candidate for the rank of the Overcute! Belldandy tells him that he can have one wish. She can also read minds.

Running through the usual wishes in his head, women, money and fame in that order, he decides that they aren't him, all

he really wants is a girlfriend. Belldandy asks him why he hasn't got a girlfriend. After much internal debate, he announces that his wish is for her to stay with him forever! (poor boy's a fool. If he knew what it got him into...No pretty girl is worth that much trouble. Well maybe...She is very pretty). His wish is granted.

The other students return to find him with a girl. They are promptly thrown out. Where are they going to live now?

Riding off on his vintage BMW motorbike and side-car, they visit his friends. They won't help, or will, but not the way he wants. After stopping to get a can of hot milk tea² to drink, she tells him that she knows somewhere to go.

Belldandy directs him. They nearly have a head on collision with a speeding car, but she uses her powers to levitate the bike. The effort exhausts her though and she passes out. It starts to rain (as usual). Keiichi ends up carrying her to a derelict temple to shelter.

In the middle of the night, Belldandy wakes up. Keiichi has a fever and she is terribly upset. Luckily her

powers cure him. She wanders outside to look around, there is an old house in the grounds.

Time for some proper magic as she winds back time for the temple.

(Serious Cute Magic!)

Keiichi wakes up in a strange house and wonders what has happened. Belldandy tells him that they will live here. By the time he has bought essential goodies, his bank account is in 3 figures (remember, these are yen) and he has to live on that for a month! Just as they are about to settle down to a life of domesticity - (this bit loses something in translation, as important facial expressions are missing.) A girl opens the door!

"Megumi! What are you doing here?"
Keiichi asks.

She gives him a sly look and comes in.

"Ojama shimasu. Wow, Kei-chan, what are you doing with a gaijin woman? I've come to stay with you"

Belldandy asks who the girl is. It is Keiichi's younger sister (imoto) Megumi. She has come to study at university. Megumi tells her older brother (onii-chan) that she won't tell mother, and isn't your friend beautiful, she looks like a goddess. Won't it be fun, Belldandy thinks, 3 people. Keiichi muffles her when she is about to say that she is a goddess. Megumi gives Keiichi a present from their

mother. It is 4000¥, they are saved! At this point, Keiichi's fellow students show up. Sempai is amazed that Morisato-kun has 2 cute women!

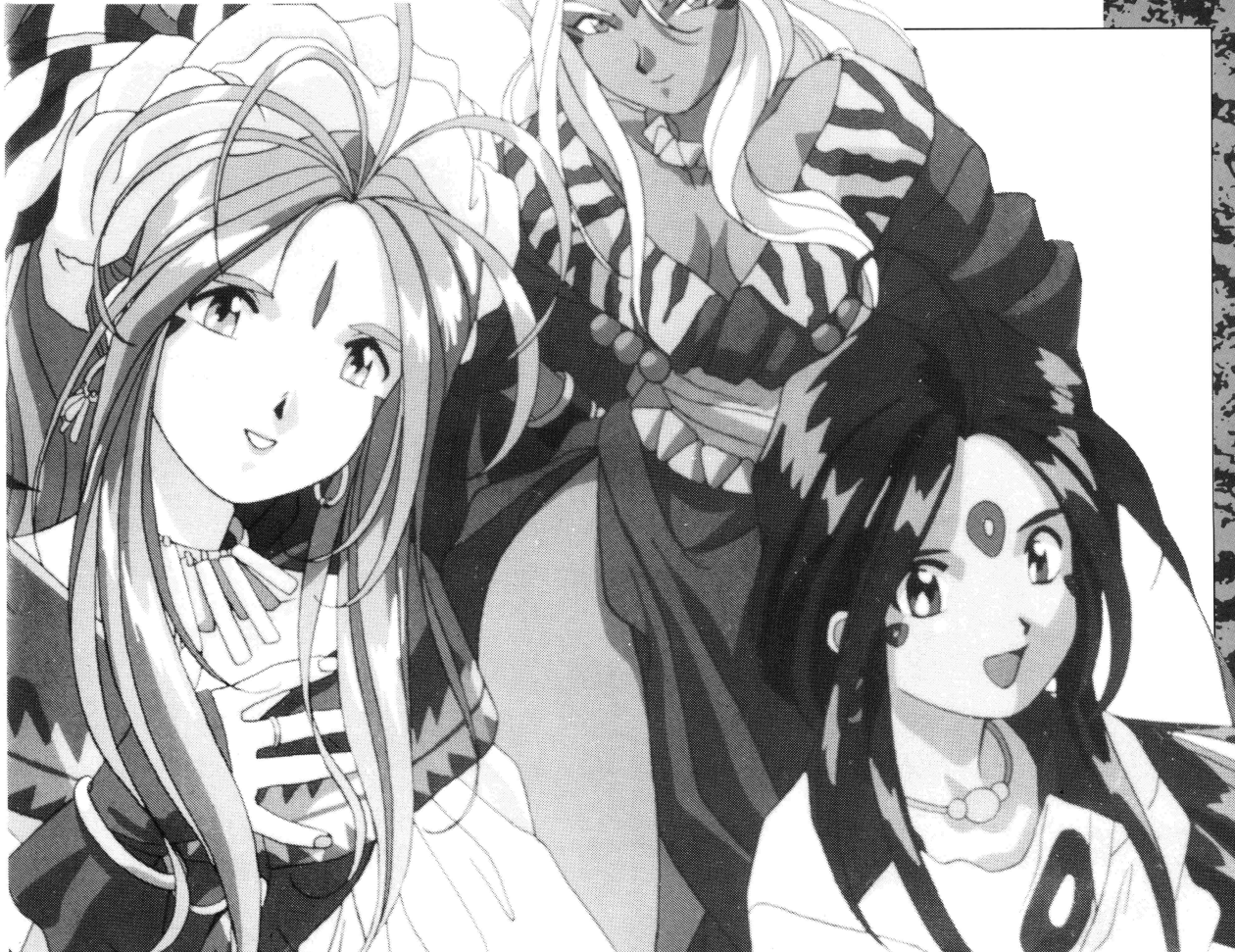
"She's my younger sister!"

Megumi introduces herself, she's going to study at Nekomi too? "So yo."
Obviously an ideal excuse for a party! Keiichi and Belldandy sneak out of the party to watch the moon and cherry blossoms. He puts a tentative arm around her and she leans on him.

This is the first of four parts to Ah! My Goddess which is based on the popular manga of the same name by popular artist/author Fujishima Kosuke which is currently being serialised in Italy by Star Comics and is likely to appear in English via the United States very soon. Character designs are very nice and faithful to the original with fatal levels of cute and lots of soft focus (and thankfully - no robots!). Luckily there is a good story, or it might have been unbearably sweet.

'Not 'Verndandy' as sometimes mis-represented. This is how she pronounces it, so this is the definitive transmogrification.

'This stuff really exists, it comes from vending machines and is loaded with enough sugar to kill!'



AZ TO OF ANIME

By Steve Kyte

K

KADOKAWA HARUKI

Producer of live action and anime feature films such as **SILENT MÖBIUS**, **THE DAGGER OF KAUMI** and **HARMAGEDDON (GENMA TAISEN)**, which features character design by **Otomo (AKIRA)** and soundtrack music by Keith Emerson of Emerson, Lake and Palmer fame.

KAIJU

Japanese for "monster". The Japanese love of monsters is almost as legendary as their love of robots and both anime & live action tv, and movies are crawling with them. **GODZILLA** has plenty of competition but remains the most famous and best loved of them all.

KANZAKI MASAOMI

Writer/artist of the manga **XENON:HEAVY METAL WARRIOR**

KATE and JULIE ▼

Believe it or not, that's what Italian tv calls those Lovely Angels, Kei and Yuri and their tv series **THE DIRTY PAIR**. Kinda cute really...



KAWAII

Japanese for CUTE! An integral concept of Japanese existence, CUTE is big business in Japan, just ask BANDAI whose **SD GUNDAM** merchandise has taken the country by storm.

KIMBA - THE WHITE LION

Us dubbed version of **TEZUKA's** famous tv series **JUNGLE EMPEROR**, made in 1965 and syndicated in the US in 66-67. **JUNGLE EMPEROR** was Japan's first colour tv cartoon series. The US version ran for 52 episodes, though Tezuka-sensei went on to do a sequel series and a feature film version.

KITAZUME YOSHIYUKI

Chara designer on **CHAR'S COUNTER-ATTACK**, **ZZ GUNDAM** and **MEGA-ZONE 23 - PART III**. Also key animator on tv series **AURA BATTLER DUNBINE** and **HEAVY METAL L-GAIM**, and artist/director of the **STARLIGHT ANGEL** segment of **ROBOT CARNIVAL**.

KITTY PRODUCTIONS

Production company responsible for anime versions of **RUMIKO TAKAHASHI's** manga such as **URUSEI YATSURA**, **MAISON IKKOKU** and **RANMA 1/2**.

KOBAYASHI MAKOTO

Model maker/illustrator/mecha designer, work featured in **Z** and **ZZ GUNDAM**, **BIRTH** (aka **THE WORLD OF THE TALISMAN**) and **VENUS WARS**. Heavily influenced by French illustrator/comic artist Jean "MOEBIUS" Girard; this is particularly noticeable in his manga **DRAGON'S HEAVEN**, later made into an OVA.

KODANSHA

One of Japan's largest publishing companies who (among many other subjects) turnout many manga and anime related items. Biggest success outside Japan is Katsuhiro Otomo's **AKIRA** which has just started it's official English run in Dark Horse International's **MANGA MANIA**.

KOIKE KAZUO

Writer; best known in the West as author of **LONE WOLF AND CUB** manga, **KOIKE** is considered one of Japan's most famous and successful writers. **LONE WOLF AND CUB** (**KOZURE OKAMI**) has been turned in a series of highly successful films and a tv series; the first 3 films were edited together and dubbed into English as **SHOGUN ASSASSIN**. Runs own manga publishing/production company, **STUDIO SHIP, INC.**, and is founder of **GEKIGA-SONJUKO**, a school for manga writers/artists which has turned out many famous names including **RUMIKO TAKAHASHI**.

KOJIMA GOSEKE

Manga artist, longtime collaborator with **KOIKE** and artist on the **LONE WOLF AND CUB** manga, released in the West by **FIRST PUBLISHING**.

L

LENSMAN

US English-dubbed version by **HARMONY GOLD** (see separate entry) of the feature film **GALACTIC PATROL LENS-MAN** (1984), based (loosely!) on the space-opera novels by E.E. 'DOC' SMITH. Harmony Gold went on to produce other compilation films (**SECRET OF THE LENS**, **POWER OF THE LENS**), using footage from the **LENSMAN** tv series which followed the. The **LENSMAN** feature has just been released in Britain (June '93) by Manga Entertainment.



LOCKE THE SUPERPOWER

US English version of the feature film **LOCKE THE SUPERMAN (CHOJIN LOCKE, 1984)** created by **YUKI HIJIKI**. Currently on video release in the UK as **STAR WARRIORS**.

This is hopefully the start of a regular column on anime video gaming, that is if we can get enough stuff to cover - keeping up with Japanese-only releases is not an easy task and getting actual copies of games to review is even harder. Nevertheless I'll do my best to cover a variety of formats but if you happen to spot a spare copy of **Silent Möbius** for the Sharp 68000 and something to run it on going cheap...Well, then you should probably be writing this column!

For this first outing, I thought I would go over a few of the more easily available and recent anime-ish games around (I say 'anime-ish' because although many games look as if they might come via a manga or anime, a lot of them merely use the style). Nearly all of these games have been reviewed in the British gaming press recently so I won't go over old ground by reviewing them again.

First off isn't really a video game at all but I felt I had to say something about it...Yes,



the **BARCODE BATTLER** finally makes it's way over to the UK. This small unassuming little black box has been taking Japan by storm (and also causing some food retailers a few headaches as Japanese kids raided stores for items with the highest barcodes on them), yet all the fuss seems to have passed many of us by, after all why would we want to watch a tiny LCD screen with just a few numbers flashing up when we could be blazing a trail through space with Starfox (opps! sorry...Starwing). Well, without getting too deep about it, it seems that the Japanese are able to imagine and visualise characters and settings much better than us without the need for (and American games designers for the SEGA Mega CD take note here) badly done so-called interactive movies, this could also be the reason they like often graphically primitive, but huge sprawling RPGs as opposed to

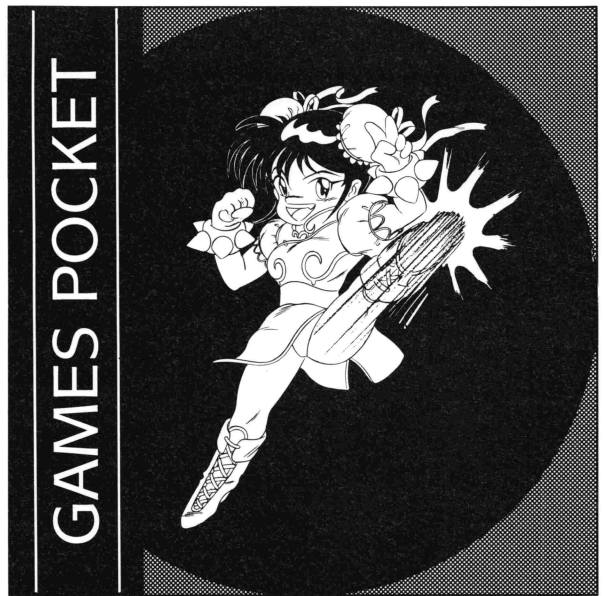
shooting games. Still I would certainly be more inclined to get a battler if like in Japan you could get code cards with great little **SD GUNDAM**-alikes on them instead of the same old boring elves and goblins (yawn!)

Speaking of Japanese console RPGs, this is a whole genere just waiting to leapt upon. You may have read about **Dragon Quest V** and the fuss it caused when it was first released. This game is a direct descendant of a manga and anime, combine this with characters designed by Akira Toriyama (the creator of **DragonBall (Z)** and one of Japan's favourite manga author/artist's) and you can start to understand the appeal which goes far further than just how good the game is. Unfortunately, it seems we're going to have to wait a little longer than expected to see the Western version of **Dragon Quest**.

'Dragon Warrior', as the release date has now been put back to 1994. For the moment anyone wanting to see what all the RPG fuss is about should get a copy of **'Final Fantasy II'** (not **'Mystic Quest'**, this is not a true representative) which is available on American import and is soon to have an official British release.

OK, back to more standard fare. Since the appearance of the infamous **'Streetfighter II'**, beat-

em-ups have been all the rage and there are now some anime contenders on the scene: **Ranma 1/2** has appeared on both the PC Engine Super CD Rom and the Super Famicom (SNES) and is soon to come out on the Mega CD. The CD versions are a real hoot as the enlarged storage allows for long animated sequences and real sound, the Famicom game whilst having some great graphics suffers from being far too easy, and is not a worthwhile purchase (especially not at grey import prices!) unless you are a real die-hard Ranma fan. That happy chap Kenshiro, the Fist of the North Star popped up recently in another Super Famicom fist-fest (**North Star Ken 6**) but this merely proved the old adage "Big sprites do not a beat-em-up make" and so this is a game to avoid like the turtles! Yet another SNES fighting extravaganza (sorry about this but Nintendo does seem to



By Wil Overton

have had more than it's fair share recently) is **DragonBall Z** which does have a little more going for it not the least of which is a great feature whereby the screen splits in two allowing you to fight at a distance. Finally in this little lot comes **SD Great Battle III** which although not a great game does get my vote for having the cutest characters. All these games have been reviewed in one or other of the British and American gaming magazines with more space than I have here for a proper review so I've intentionally left things short.

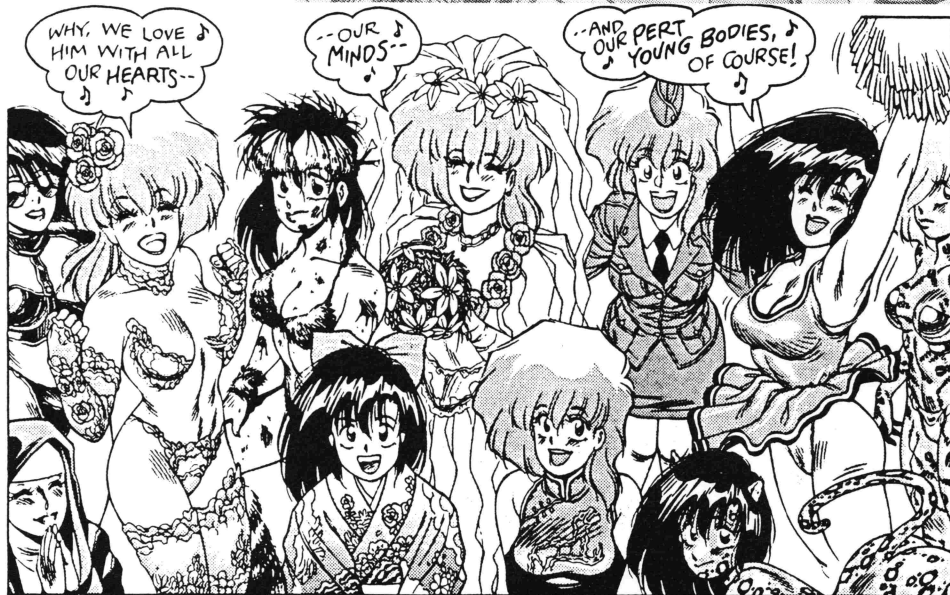


GAMES CAPSULE

33

"Stand tall, don't think small, don't put your back against the wall..." This line from Tommy Shaw's song "Girls With Guns" could be aptly applied to the creative forces behind Dark Horse Comics, who, since the mid-eighties, have forged a solid steel reputation in the world of independent comics as the home of high quality product. With titles like the acclaimed CONCRETE, THE MASK, GRENDL and genre smashes like ROBOCOP, TERMINATOR, PREDATOR, ALIENS, STAR WARS and INDIANA JONES, Dark Horse has become a force (or should that be "a horse"?) to be reckoned with. Recently, DH have begun to tap into the ever-increasing manga market with an impressive range of books; CARAVAN KIDD, VERSION (both reviewed in A.UK #4), THE VENUS WARS and ORION (reviewed in A.UK #3). These new releases are not just limited to the United States, and this summer will see the debut of MANGA MANIA (the first issue should be on the newsstands as you read this - ed.) a monthly anthology title published here in the U.K. by the company's European arm, Dark Horse International. In recent months, DH have been lucky enough to work with translation and creation house Studio Proteus on books like OUTLANDERS. Now, in a co-publication effort, the two groups have come together to deliver comicbook adventures of anime's most popular all-girl teams...

In the beginning there were the novels; and the novels beget the TV series, and the TV series beget the movies, and the movies beget a great clamour among the otaku, and out of this clamour came The Dirty Pair... Born from a series of SF novels that started in 1980, Kei and Yuri, the Lovely Angels, have since become two of



Girls With Guns

By Jim Swallow

the most popular anime characters ever to step on a cel. This dynamic damsel duo formed a two-woman team that was a space-going cross between Cagney and Lacey and the Gorgeous ladies of Wrestling, always engaged in rapid-action hijinks that usually resulted in massive amounts of property damage and expenditure of ammunition. In the closing months of 1988, Toren Smith, one of the driving forces behind Studio Proteus, fielded the concept of a Dirty Pair miniseries to Eclipse Comics, and with the talents of then-newcomer artist Adam Warren, created the first ever comic book adventures of the Lovely Angels. Basing their character designs on creator

Haruka Takachio's original outlines, Smith and Warren launched the girls on a fast-paced adventure involving killer cyborgs, bioweapons and plenty of extreme violence. Many critics felt that Warren's depiction of the Pair was a little too 'cartoony' but by the start of the second series, he began to hit his stride, and with five issues to play with, he and Smith went into grater depth on the girls, detailing their hitherto-unknown early days as Trouble consultants through flashbacks in the story "Dangerous Acquaintances" Book Three, "A Plague Of Angels", followed, and by now Adam Warren's Dirty Pair were well and truly established graphically, with their trademark almost-

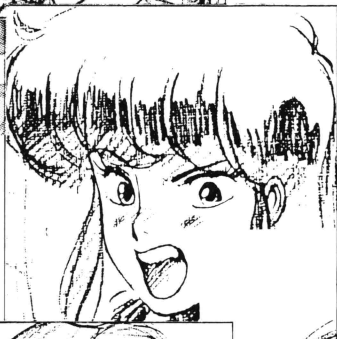
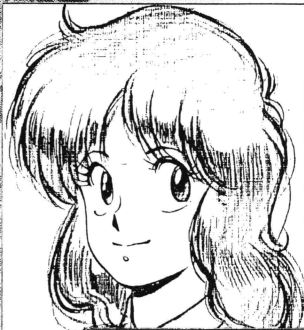
bikinis chromed into stunning sharpness. Book Three, with its tongue more firmly in its cheek than ever before played up the more "cyberpunk" elements of the 'Dirty Pair comicbook world' using them as a major plot device in another five-issue story teaming the Angels with a reporter, in a race against time to stop a sex-pervert Artificial Intelligence. Smith's fast and funny writing and Warren's blazing artwork combined to create the best Dirty Pair yet. Sadly, August '91 saw the end that series, and the threatened Book Four did not materialise, but a year and a half later,

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right through to the jumpstart action sequences, and his writing isn't half bad either. I have to admit that I miss the numerous in-jokes that dotted the previous series - stuff like the girls belting out a drunken Extreme number in "Plague of Angels" just floors me, as well as spotting the anime characters in the crowd scenes. Adam has made up for it though, with a scene where Yuri is on a date with a guy named Dan... A thinly veiled reference to the father of Takachiho's Crusher Joe Hmmm...It's a pity too that Mugh, the pair's catlike gene-engineered sidekick, doesn't appear - although he was quite active in the first series, he stayed out of sight until a cameo in Book Three. The variety of Sim scenarios the Pair are subjected to let Warren put Kei and Yuri through death, hell and mass destruction, as well as a few scenes in issue three that are probably in the heart of any male DP

fan...I'll say no more than; Kei in leather-spike-bitch gear and Yuri as a leopardette, and leave you hanging... And the coup de grace? Well, no-one gets on a roller-coaster just for the end of the ride, because when the wheels stop, it's never as exciting as when the start. But that said, SIM HELL is a real white-knuckle, E-ticket ride: Open those pages and hang on!



with Dark Horse filling Eclipse's role, the girls are back, and they're smokin'. **DIRTY PAIR : SIM HELL**, this time written and drawn by Adam Warren, is four issues of slamming, twisty reality inversion. Working again from the "cyberpunk" angle, the plot involves Kei visiting the 3WA central computer for her annual Trouble consultant evaluation, which involves simulated testing in the SimNet, where the user jacks into a virtual reality environment. When something goes wrong, it's up to Yuri to plug herself into Kei's cyberspace world and get her out before braindeath occurs. But then, things are never that simple when the Dirty Pair are involved...



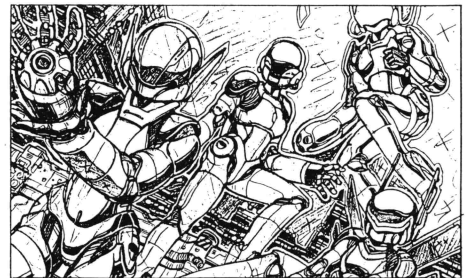
In many ways, the torch that the Dirty Pair lit back in the early eighties has been passed on to one show, one team of action heroines; Bubblegum Crisis' Knight Sabers, Priss, Celia, Linna and Nene. Their cyberpunk future metropolis of Mega-

Tokyo is a lot more hard and unforgiving than Kei and Yuri's United Galactica, and the personalities of the Sabers reflect it - Priss' hard-edged determination, Celia's search for justice, Linna's need for belonging and purpose, and Nene's "little sister" loneliness. With the fourth Dirty Pair title now firmly finished, Adam Warren has turned his sights on Bubblegum Crisis, putting together a four-issue miniseries in colour, due later this year. At the moment, only pencil roughs and model sheets are available for review, but even from these, Warren's clear, steely style is

Warren's art has run riot here, from the hot and cold tonal blends on the covers,

very much in evidence. The character designs for the comic are true to the

series, accurately capturing the personality 'edges' of each of the four women, yet also adding a slight spin to the portrayal. The Hardsuits are faithful to the Crisis designs, yet subtly different; The suits are somewhat "rationalised", made more realistic by the lessening of the lengthy legs and arms, almost doing away with the high heels of the anime versions. Given Warren's penchant for cyberpunk styling, it's a sure thing that the Crisis miniseries will exercise him to the full. Admittedly, four issues for a series a complex ass BGC doesn't sound like a lot, but given the amount of action squeezed into the Dirty Pair comics, it'll be enough and then some. Watch the skies for this one.



COMICOGRAPHY

DIRTY PAIR, four issue black and white limited series by Eclipse Comics/Studio Proteus.

- #1: Biohazard • #2: Complications
- #3: Outbreak • #4: Remission
- (Reprinted in trade paperback form as "Dirty Pair: Biohazards")

DIRTY PAIR II, five issue black and white limited series by Eclipse comics/Studio Proteus.

- #1: Past Things • #2: Dangerous Acquaintances
- #3: Unquiet Zone
- #4: One Of My Turns • #5: Ground Zero

(Reprinted in trade paperback form as "Dirty Pair: Dangerous Acquaintances")

THE DIRTY PAIR BOOK THREE: A PLAGUE OF ANGELS, five issue black and white limited series by Eclipse Comics/Studio Proteus.

- #1: Guns, Lies And Armageddon
- #2: Random Access Memories
- #3: Opening Shots • #4: Hair Trigger
- #5: —30—

(To be reprinted in trade paperback form)

THE DIRTY PAIR: SIM HELL, four issue black and white limited series by Dark Horse Comics/Studio Proteus, on sale now!

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS, four issue colour limited series by Dark Horse Comics/Studio Proteus, on sale late 1993.

Japan is marginalised in a new history of comics . . .

Roger Sabin comes clean in his introduction to **ADULT COMICS** when he writes that his book has a predominantly 'British' perspective. His mission is to scotch the old myth that the history of comics is the history of American comics, and he manages to do this very well in 250 pages of scholarly narrative. Unfortunately, the position of Japan in this history is very much that of an outside contender, as Sabin devotes most of his book to the English-speaking world.

The layout of the book is confusing at times. The first part deals with British works from "...the first modern comic" in 1884 up to the market slump that followed the 1980s boom in graphic novels. The main body of the text deals with British comics post-1960, but since this involves much trans-Atlantic cross-pollination, Sabin frequently has to refer to items yet to be discussed.

The second section finds us leapfrogging back across the Atlantic to look at the American scene from 1930 onwards. After notes concerning American precursors of genuine comics, Sabin goes on to deal with the Golden Age, the devastating effect of the 1954 Comics Code (reprinted in an appendix), the lean years of censorship and the recent resurgence of adult comics. This is rather truncated, because he has covered much of this ground already, and the need for repetition calls into question his policy of separating the linked markets of Britain and the USA.

The final section contains a valuable discussion of other aspects of comic culture. Topics include the relationship of adult comics to other media (especially cinema), the position of women, and the ongoing debate over whether it is necessary to think in terms of 'high' and 'low' art. There is also a single chapter entitled 'Worldcomics', which is devoted almost exclusively to Japan and Francophone Europe and it is in this part that the flaws in Sabin's argument become most obvious. Intent on securing a name for Britain as the birthplace of the medium, he dismisses any idea of an independent Japanese origin. We are told that the development of comics in Japan only began after the arrival of Westerners in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Sabin points out that satirical magazines only flourished in the wake

BACK TO THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

By Jonathan Clements

of the English-language Japan Punch (1862), and is dismissive of anything pre-dating this, likening it to "...tracing Western comics to the Bayeux Tapestry." But if we use Sabin's own definition of what a comic actually is (see his Chapter 1) we can quite easily include Japanese gekiga and gessaku from as early as the 1700s. They were, after all, popular works that united text with illustration, mass-produced for general consumption. Sabin is well aware that the term 'manga' predates his (British) "first modern comic" by over fifty years, but he confines this admission to a footnote. His history is strictly linear, and allows no room for the genre to have more than one point of origin. Japan is undoubtedly a separate world, cut off linguistically and geographically from other industrialised nations, but it has also been the scene of many developments that run parallel to the West, rather than deriving directly from it. For someone interested in the universal appeal of comics, it might have been in Sabin's interest to pursue this line of thought, rather than write off foreign achievements as irrelevancies. Issues of origin aside, Sabin experiences considerable difficulty in maintaining his Anglocentric stance. He admits, grudgingly, that the Japanese comics industry is the largest in the world, but notes that when exported, Japanese material "...did not sell especially well, and from the start assumed a position in comparison with American comics analogous to art-films and Hollywood." Any mention of the influence of Japanese artists upon American artists is (again) restricted to footnotes, and Sabin does not seem to have devoted much thought to the possibility that sales of Japanese comics in the West have been greatly in excess of those for Western comics in Japan.

Using Sabin's book as a model, it would be easy for a Japanese author to write a history of comics centred on Japan, marginalising Western works and concentrating on successes both in Japan and across East Asia. Such a study would be just as incomplete, but could probably make a better case for the primacy of one nation by relegating the relatively few Western works to a single chapter. It could also come up with some more impressive figures. The monthly circulation of certain manga digests can run rings around the English Viz, which, according to Sabin, is "...the best-selling comic of all time" with sales of a mere one million.

Although Sabin does give some space to Western cartoons, treatment of anime is sadly lacking. Akira, the comic and film, gets a cursory nod in a sentence that contradicts Sabin's earlier claim by mentioning the "...growing popularity of Japanese adult comics in Britain." And, as if Akira were the first-ever animated film, Sabin predicts that the future will bring "copyists", blatantly disregarding the numerous anime series that have been on our TV screens for the last fifteen years.

The value of Japanese comics, both as artistic examples of the medium and as items for popular consumption, is something with which Sabin is unwilling to grapple. In recent years, Japanese works have enjoyed a popularity in the West strong enough to support several related journals (of which only Mangajin is cited in Sabin's bibliography). Fred Schodt's Manga! Manga! (on which Sabin relies heavily) broke the ground over a decade ago, although it is of limited value to students of cross-cultural studies because it deals exclusively with Japanese material. Sabin's work will undoubtedly become the standard textbook for some years to come, and as an introduction to English-language comics, it performs quite adequately. However, in refusing to stray too far from his arbitrary, trans-Atlantic axis, he has failed to produce a fully comprehensive study of the comics phenomenon.

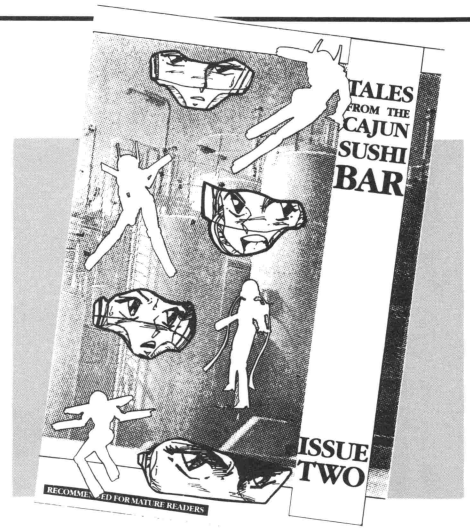
Roger Sabin (1993)
ADULT COMICS: An Introduction
 Routledge
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FANSCENE ROUNDUP

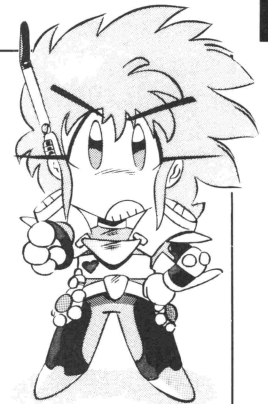
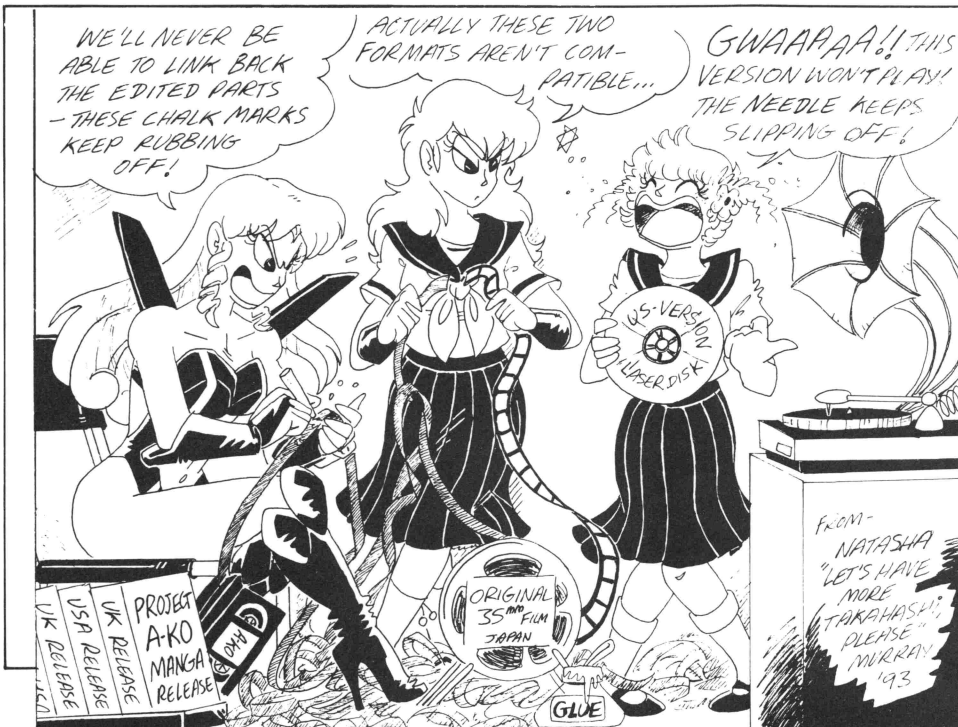
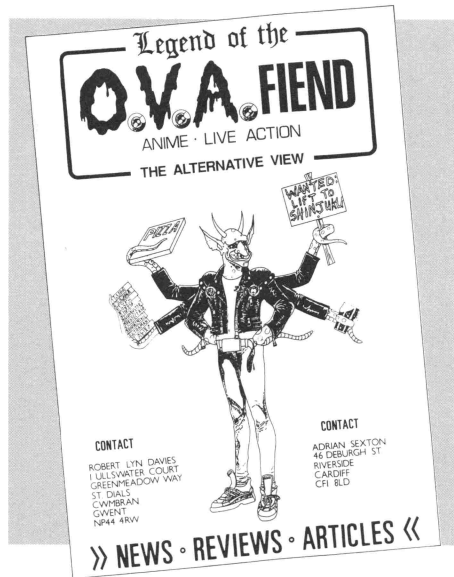
AD FILE 3 saw the launch of three new British fanzines – a sure sign of healthy development in fandom. Two were available in Sheffield, one was being trailed and will be available by the time you read this. All are non-profit fan publications.

The missing one was Josh Clark's **ANIMENIA**. I can't tell you much about it other than that it promises all the things you want from a fanzine – info, news, reviews, contacts with other fans, pictures of cute individuals and so on – but an ssae to Josh will produce more details including price and how to get a copy. Write to **JOSH CLARK**, 2 Birkdale Drive, Immingham, Grimsby, S. Humberside, DN40 2LB. The other newcomer was **LEGEND OF THE O.V.A. FIEND**, an eclectic offering from Robert Lyn Davies and Adrian Sexton, which was selling briskly at £1.50 a copy. It's A5 format with a nice cover – their mascot, the O.V.A. Fiend him/itself, is prominently featured and looks like a true party animal. Adrian and Robert are aiming to cover both anime and live action and want to encourage discussion, debate and a wide range of different viewpoints in their pages. It's probably best to send an ssae to check postage rates, etc, and you can write to either **ROBERT LYN DAVIES**, 1 Ullswater Court, Greenmeadow Way, St. Dials, Cwmbran, Gwent, NP44 4RW, or **ADRIAN SEXTON**, 46 DeBurgh Street, Riverside, Cardiff, CF1 8LD. The third publication was a new

fanzine but not from a newcomer – the popular **TALES FROM THE CAJUN SUSHI BAR**, premiered at **UKCAC** last summer, now has a second issue. The four original **CAJUN SUSHI** makers are joined by four new chefs to create eleven new stories ranging in length from Jim Swallow's AREA 88 one-pager **HEARTSEEKER** to Peter J. Evans' epic **BUBBLE GUM CRISIS** tale **INTO DARKNESS**, and in mood from Jay Felton's light-hearted look at **SAINT SEIYA** entitled **DON'T USE YOUR COSMO IN THE BEDROOM** to Jonathan Clements' bleak **GREY** story **PARADISE CITY**. All the stories make good reading but I have to confess a distinct partiality to Peter Evans' two contributions. **INTO DARKNESS** is quite simply one of the best pieces of cyberpunk I've ever



read. His understanding of the **BGC** characters is becoming so complete as to be almost incestuous and the story gives each her due in a near-perfect reading of their strengths and their need for each other. The half-buma psychic September is a haunting creation and the pace and structure are beautifully controlled. **BABUSHKA WORLDS** is something I never imagined possible, a dark and wholly threatening **URUSEI YATSURA** story which still manages to keep all Takahashi's wacky personalities intact and reacting like themselves throughout. Takahashi-sensei herself, a lady whose ability to write on the dark side is consistently underrated in the West, could hardly have done her creations more justice. If you want to expand your horizons into anime fan fiction, this is the obvious venue. You can get a copy by sending £2 plus 50p p&p to **JIM SWALLOW**, 21 Wadhams House, 12 College Close, Edmonton, London N18 2XT.



By Natasha Murray

FROM-NATASHA
"LET'S HAVE MORE TAKAHASHI PLEASE"
MURRAY 1993

anime
EYECATCH



Dear Helen,

I'm writing to ask you about two things. Firstly, I have **PROJECT A-KO** in the original subtitled version. Recently USMC brought out an English language dub which I bought to make a comparison. I promptly found that there is NO comparison! In my opinion subtitled beats dubbing any day of the week, but am I in the minority on this? Is there a consensus of opinion? Which do most people prefer? I'm curious. Secondly, and here I must ask you to excuse a brief but piercing scream of anguish and horror – AAARGHHHHH! – there that's better, I am hearing these ugly, hideous, appalling rumours around my local comics shop, that the supply of quality anime from Japan is slowing and may even be coming to a stop! that the supply of new stories and new talent may be drying up! Can this be true? And if so, what do fans do? Should we be writing letters, and if so to whom? Say it ain't so! Pleeease!

Michael P. McCarty Jnr., Miami, Florida, USA

HELEN: The sub-dub debate rages and though some people claim it's old hat now it never fails to get people talking. Certainly to British fans the subject is still relatively fresh because we just haven't had anime available for as long as you have in the States. I've had a lot of letters on the subject recently so I'm asking all readers via this page to let us share their views. Write a piece not more than 500 words long, saying which you prefer and why, or if you have no preference and why, and we'll publish **THE**

GREAT DEBATE – DUB OR SUB? in a future issue. Obviously preference will go to the best argued and most intelligent arguments when we come to select for printing, but everyone – amateur or pro, fan with no axe to grind or political animal – is very welcome to contribute. Let's see what people think.

Personally I think that ugly rumour is just an ugly rumour. It's true that anime production hit a peak in the late 80s for tv and film, but OAVs are holding their own in an ever-changing market, and as for there being less talent and new ideas out there in Japan, well, I just don't believe it! It sounds like the sort of thing old-timers say about their favourite theme – over here, football fans of a certain age opine that there are no players around with the inventiveness and originality of those of the late 70s, but back then those same fans' grandfathers were looking at the greats of the 70s and bemoaning the fact that none of them had the originality and inventiveness of the greats of the 50s! And so it goes in just about every field of human endeavour – the Good Old Days are always perceived as better than the degenerate present. To which I can only say phooey. There's some great talent out there and some wonderful new ideas coming through. There was always dross and there still is dross, but through it shines the glint of pure anime gold.

Dear ANIME UK,

Thank you for sending me the information about yourself when I wrote to you after reading about you in the **DAILY MIRROR**, and for your sales list. I was surprised to find that there were no actual videos on the list. Can I suppose you do not sell any?

TIM HARDING, Bristol, Avon

HELEN: No, we don't sell videos. The **MANGA VIDEO** and **ANIME PROJECTS** tapes are widely available in specialist shops or by mail order, and we don't import the US tapes for the same reason. Your custom for videos is better used to support and encourage excellent retailers like the Sheffield Space Centre, Top Ten Soho and Forbidden Planet Oxford Street to stock even more imports and extend their range – we couldn't compete with their buying power and in this area they can give you the best service. Of course, neither we nor any other responsible retailer or dealer would

ever sell bootleg videos, ie tapes produced for profit without the consent of their copyright holders, and we urge you not to buy them. If you want wider access to tapes from Japan and the USA, join one of the anime fan clubs listed in these pages and contact other fans.

Dear Fellow Fans from the Mother Country,

Imagine my surprise when looking for a similar anime publication (Animerica published by Viz) when I stumble upon the fifth issue of a high profile, slick publication from the UK. I eagerly picked it up, even though it cost me \$6.04 of American dollars. Ouch! Nevertheless, I am glad I did. One thing that I found peculiar about this issue and about Anime Fandom in general. It mainly comes from points of view. For instance, in the Animail section of issue five, Simon Mark DeWolfe mentions that B-ko's father looks like Tony Stark. 'Tony Stark?' I thought to myself. 'Balderdash! Everybody knows that's Ted Turner!'

Of course, not everyone would or could know that he *also* looks like Ted Turner, owner of TBS and the Atlanta Braves. If one is from the Southeastern part of America, however, one would *swear* he is good 'ol Ted.

Also, in the news section, it was reported that the Gundam 0083: Stardust memory is being made into a *120 minute* movie with *five* minutes of new animation called "Remnants of Zeon."

Meanwhile, an American publication said that the same movie running *110 minutes* with *ten* minutes of new animation called "Zion's Fading Light" has already come out *and* completed its theatrical run! What gives?

The only facts that these two publications have in common is that there is a movie based on a compilation of Gundam 0083 series. Maybe I'm just being picky, but it was something I noticed.

Keep up the good work, and I wish you continued success.

Darron Sampson, Washington, USA

HELEN: Many thanks for your letter and kind words. I'm glad you enjoy **ANIME UK** and I hope you also found **ANIMERICA** – a magazine well worth supporting!

Ted Turner is principally known over here as the man who married Jane

Fonda, but looking up some old press photos of him I can see the resemblance you mention. Maybe Tony Stark is really Ted Turner's hidden identity and he has a second life in Japan as the devoted father of Ms Daitokuji? There's a great fan fiction opportunity in there somewhere.... I think the difference in the news sections of **ANIME UK** and "another wellknown brand" over the **GUNDAM** movie probably has something to do with time of writing. The info in teasers and small items of news on new items tends to change as more and more information becomes available or changes are made approaching release. Final edits can vary considerably from the pre-production estimate. Our **GUNDAM** expert Dafydd Neal Dyar updated our information on the movie based on the latest snippets from the Japanese anime mags, but by the time the feature was printed, made its way to the States and was bought by you, a local publication had probably got some later information. I think that's the explanation.

Anyway, hope you keep enjoying the magazine – and don't worry about being picky, it really helps us pick up on our mistakes and any problems!

Dear ANIME UK,

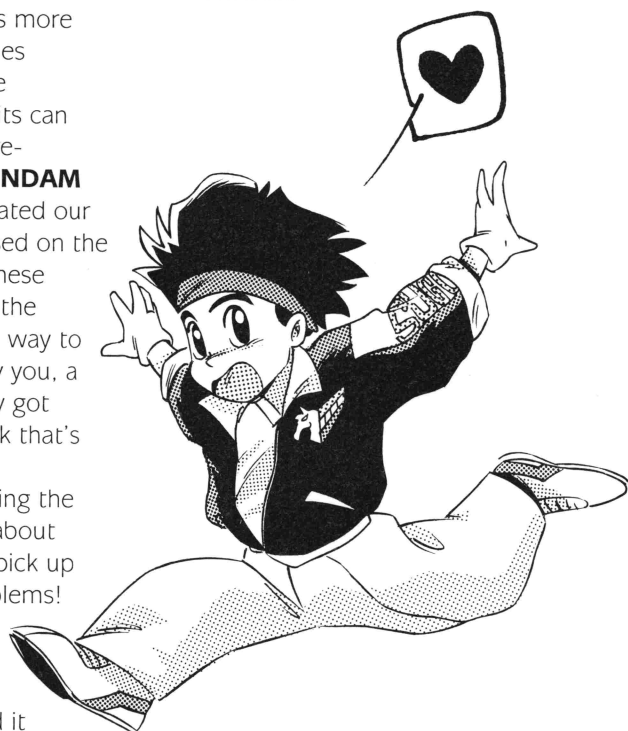
I was watching an animation programme on Channel 4 and it profiled Miyazaki Hayao's work. It showed a subtitled version of **MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO**. Could you please give me an address of a mail order company that sells it. All the local comic shops only sell the **MANGA VIDEO** releases – I would prefer subtitled anime because all the male voices in the dubbed versions sound like the sad teenage ninja turtles.

ANDREW DAVIES, Runcorn, Cheshire.

HELEN: Many thanks for your letter. I'm afraid I can't give you a very helpful answer, though!

MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO has been dubbed into English under the supervision of the Japanese studio which made it by Carl Macek. The subtitled version you saw may have come from the same source or may have been fan subtitled – I haven't been able to find out. However, it's unlikely that this version will ever be available on the commercial market. Miyazaki is known to be determined

that before any of his films have a video release in future, they will be seen in the mass-market cinema. It is very difficult in Britain – or the USA for that matter – to get this kind of release for a subtitled film of any kind, let alone a subtitled animation, which is perceived as being very much for the children's market. It's therefore likely that any film and video release will be dubbed. At present, the film (whether dubbed or subtitled) is not available on any commercial label either in the USA or in Britain.



Dear Helen

wow, what a great week this has been, BGC6, my birthday and your letter about ANIME UK all within the same four days! Many thanks for your reply, your magazine looks really interesting and I look forward to getting all the other copies.

My local video shop, VOLUME ONE, tells me that sales of anime are doing really well' and interestingly enough that the subtitled AKIRA has far outsold the dubbed version - so much for the "British public doesn't like subtitled films!" They tell me that they always have people coming in to ask about release dates and titles available from Manga Video. Bear in mind that this is a general book and video store, not a specialist outlet like Forbidden Planet. I seriously think that '93 could be the year that anime crosses over into the mainstream here. Did you see the broadcast of LAPUTA back in January, or was it only in Meridan? I think I would have to say that this is just about my number one favourite film - it is absolutely superbly drawn, it has enough original ideas to keep about three lesser films going, and the music is really evocative. In addition it has a special place

in my heart as it is the film that really turned me on to anime when I first saw it about five years ago. So come on, how about running a feature on the work of Miyazaki?
Neil Morris, Worthing, West Sussex, UK

HELEN:

I think you're right about the prospects for anime in '93, so let's keep our fingers crossed. As for an article on Miyazaki-sensei, I'm certainly hoping to do one, but it takes time to research and write about a career as long, successful and varied as his, so please be patient.

• ANIME CONTACTS

ANDY DAVIES
30 Masseyfield Road, Runcorn,
Cheshire WA7 6AE, United
Kingdom

18. SNES player and indie music fan, fave anime 3X3 EYES and BUBBLEGUM CRISIS. New to anime, so all you anime gurus out there, please write and share your knowledge!

JAMES GRANT
1571 W. Berwyn, Chicago, IL
60640, United States.

16. trying to start an anime fan group in his area, looking for penpals worldwide to exchange info and will reply to all pen pal mail; fave anime AKIRA, BUBBLEGUM CRISIS & CRASH, fave manga SILENT MÖBIUS and CRYING FREEMAN; also likes drawing and playing RPGs.

BRIAN D. CLARKE
#308-547 Niagara St., Victoria,
British Columbia V8V 1H2,
Canada.

23. student, likes just about any anime especially Bubblegum Crisis, Miyazaki or Shirow; longrunning interest in other countries, all letters welcome!

CHRIS ROLLASON
17 The Woodlands, Linton,
Cambridgeshire, CB1 6UF, United
Kingdom.

15. favourite anime AKIRA, ODIN, DOMINION TANK POLICE; other interests collecting AKIRA and SILENT MÖBIUS manga, reading, writing and drawing, and punk rock. Will write to anyone aged 8 to 80, male or female.

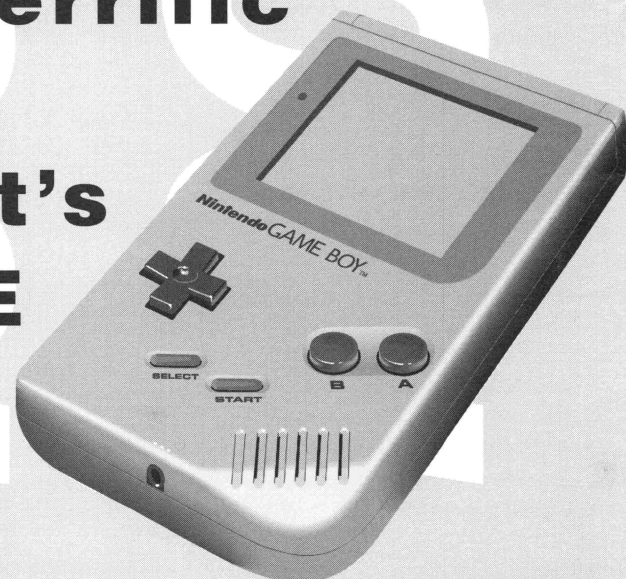
THE SAINT SEIYA FAN CLUB
c/o FOCANT Charles
Ave. Ed. Leburton, 132, 4300
Wareme, Belgium.

This isn't just for Seiya fans but everyone who loves manga especially CITY HUNTER, DRAGONBALL, anime including RECORD OF LODOSS WAR and Ys, and would love to hear from other manga fans who want to discuss, swap and make new friends; they have contacts in the United States, France, Italy and Japan, and read/speak Japanese.

JOHN OVERALL
c/o INVASION, PO Box 7,
Upminster, Essex RM14 2RH.

Moving soon, all responses will get the new address as soon as he moves in! Age 22, limited anime experience. Favourites: VAMPIRE HUNTER D, DEVILMAN, ROBOT CARNIVAL, PROJECT A-KO, AKIRA. Interests: too many to list here inc: films, own fanzine "INVASION OF THE SAD MAN EATING MUSHROOMS"

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BUBBLESUM CRISIS © ARTMIC

INGREDIENTS

- 2oz / 50g Marge or Butter
- 2oz / 50g Toffees (the creamier the better!)
- 2oz / 50g Marshmallows
- 2oz / 50g Rice Crispies (Puffed rice bubbles)
- A little cooking oil

CRISIS CRUNCHIES

You will add a little cooking oil to a cake or biscuit tin about 20cm x 20cm & melt the marge or butter in a saucepan.

- 1 Once well mixed, remove from the heat and add the rice crispies stirring again to get a good thick mixture.
- 2 Stir in the toffees and marshmallows as they gently melt in the pan.
- 3 Pour the mix into the tin & leave to set.
- 4 Cut into segments and serve. Tastes good with ice cream or chocolate sauce!
- 5

OUTZONE

ANIME UK

TARGET LOCK-ON FOR ISSUE 9
RAMAYANA
 RG VEDA • GENESIS SURVIVOR GAIARTH

ANIME GALLERY

NG KNIGHT LAMUNE & 40 Ex

If you like playing video games beware of one called "King Scasher" because you might just find a strange girl called "Milk" jumping out of the screen and dragging you off to someplace called A'lala to fight a guy called "Don Harumage". Lamune & 40 has been both a tv series and an OVA (the "Ex" version) with basically the same story both times round. Later this year a "Dx" version is due to appear with yet another subtle change of costumes but whether the story has changed any remains to be seen.

From top left, the characters are; **Lesqua** - the girlfriend of Da'Sai-der (on the far right). **Don Harumage** - the big baddie of the series. **Da'Sai-der** - Don's henchman, **Hevimeta-ko** - Da'Sai-der's adviser robot (he sits on his shoulder and shouts a lot). **Cocoa** (bottom left) - the second princess of A'lala, very quiet and a whizz with machines. **Lamuness the Brave** (with his adviser robot "**Tama-O**" on his shoulder) - the series hero, and finally **Princess Milk** - the first princess of A'lala who always seems to be stuffing food in her face.

